●近代麻雀コミックス●

# 福本伸行

FUKUMOTO NOBUYUKI 3

# 天

TEN

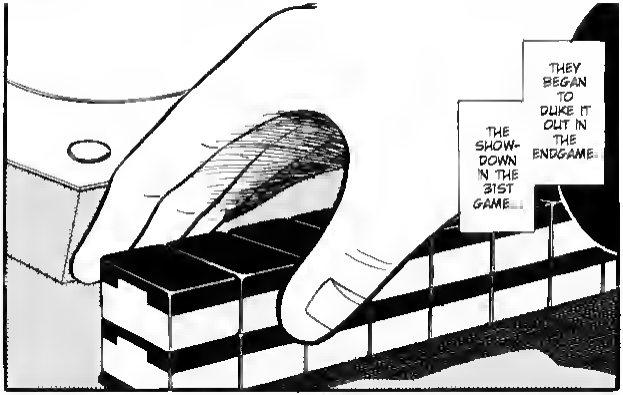
## 天和通りの快男児

THE NICE GUY ON THE PATH OF TENHOU

竹書房

TAKE SHOBO

CHAPTER
21
PRIDE'S
REWARD


THE SHOW-DOWN IN THE 31ST GAME...
THEY BEGAN TO DUKE IT OUT IN THE ENDGAME.

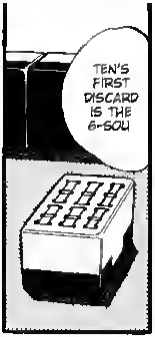
THE DIFFERENCE IN POINTS: 9500
AKAGI: 37000
TEN: 27500
SOUTH 4TH ROUND
LAST ROUND

TEN'S STARTING HAND

THIS ISN'T A GOOD STARTING HAND 4-SHAN-TEN

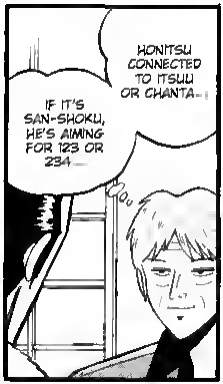
カミッ
WHAT-EVER MAY HAPPEN
BUT...
一萬 三萬 四萬 五萬 八萬
發 北
OR ELSE TSUMO ON A MANGAN HAND
AND TAKE THAT 5200 DIRECTLY FROM AKAGI
IT'LL JUST BARELY TURN THE GAME AROUND
I HAVE TO GET AT LEAST 5200 POINTS WITH THIS HAND
AKAGI'S STARTING HAND
二萬 三萬 五萬 七萬
中 東
IN SHORT
BUT... AT THIS POINT... ALL I NEED IS TO WIN WITH 1000 POINTS
CRAP, HUH
THIS STARTING HAND IS...

LIMITING THE YAKU HE CAN USE...
TEN HAS TO COMPLETE A 5200 OR MANGAN HAND


TEN'S FIRST DISCARD IS THE 6-SOU

I JUST HAVE TO WIN FASTER THAN TEN

EITHER WAY, IT SEEMS LIKE THAT'LL TAKE SOME TIME... TEN
HEH HEH


HONITSU CONNECTED TO ITSUU OR CHANTA...
IF IT'S SAN-SHOKU, HE'S AIMING FOR 123 OR 234...

6TH TURN

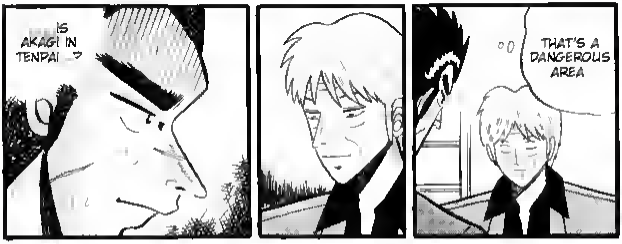
PON!!
THIS IS BAD....
IF KAMICHA GOES FOR A FAST WIN, I'LL LOSE EVERY-THING

TEN'S HAND; 7TH TURN

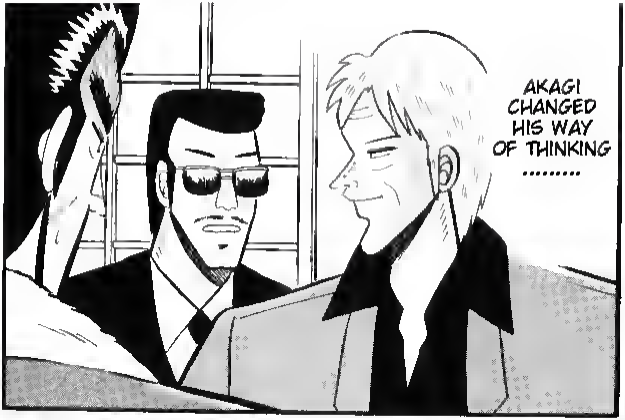
SHIT.....
THIS HAND'S GOING SO SLOW.
CHII.
URGH !!
AT A VITAL TIME LIKE THIS

...DOES THIS GET HIM INTO TENPAI...?
THIS IS BAD...!

HUH .....?

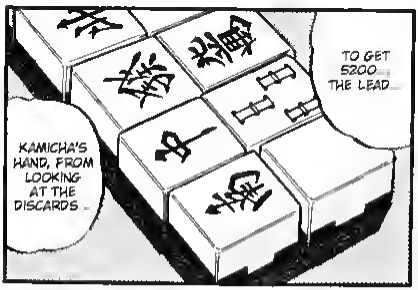

IS AKAGI IN TENPAI ..?
THAT'S A DANGEROUS AREA

...OH REALLY
BUT NEXT TURN
HE KEPT DEALING DANGEROUS TILE AFTER DANGEROUS TILE FROM HIS HAND

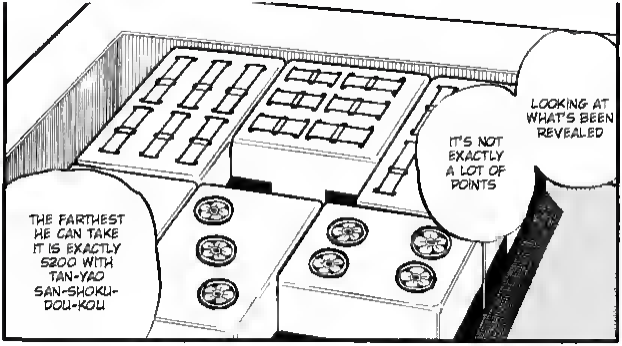

AKAGI CHANGED HIS WAY OF THINKING .....

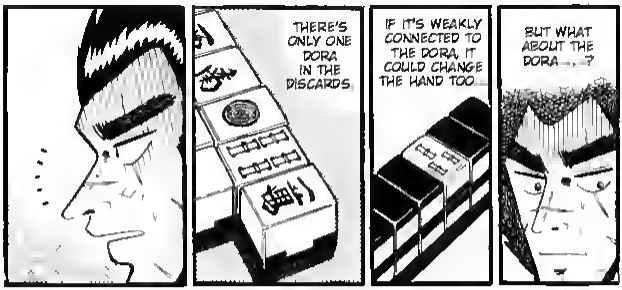
HE'S GOING FOR SASHIKOMI
(INTENTIONALLY DEALING INTO A CHEAP HAND TO KEEP THE LEAD)

HE'S GIVEN UP ON IT
HIS HAND IS PROBABLY GOING WORSE THAN HE EXPECTED

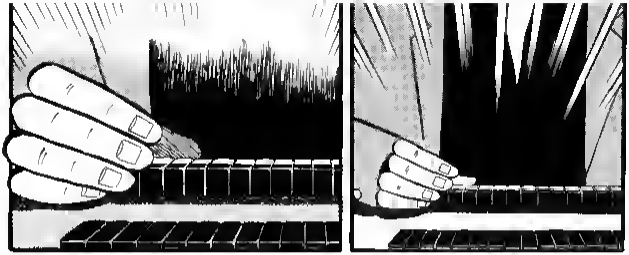

KAMICHA'S HAND, FROM LOOKING AT THE DISCARDS
TO GET 5200 THE LEAD

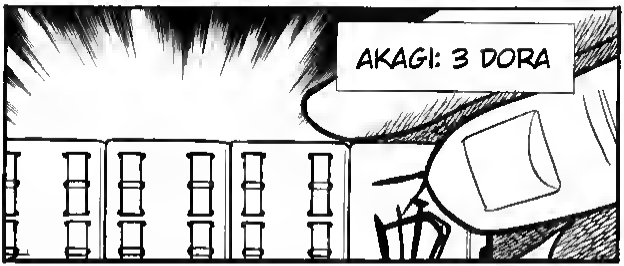
AS FAR AS THE OTHERS GO
I NEED TO GET 5200 POINTS TO MAKE A COMEBACK BUT


LOOKING AT WHAT'S BEEN REVEALED
IT'S NOT EXACTLY A LOT OF POINTS
THE FARTHEST HE CAN TAKE IT IS EXACTLY 5200 WITH TAN-YAO SAN-SHOKU-DOU-KOU

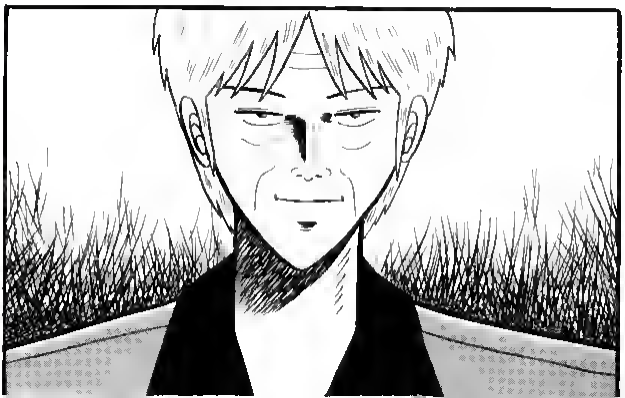

THERE'S ONLY ONE DORA IN THE DISCARDS
IF IT'S WEAKLY CONNECTED TO THE DORA, IT COULD CHANGE THE HAND TOO
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE DORA...?

AKAGI'S GOT THE REMAINING THREE...!
THAT'S IT...!

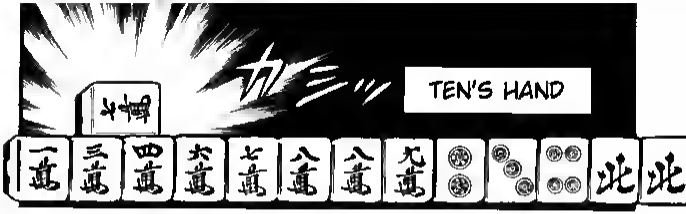


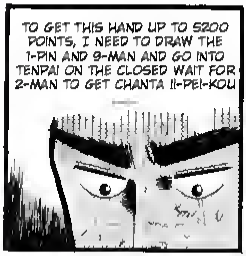

AKAGI: 3 DORA

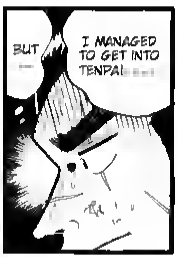
HIS HAND



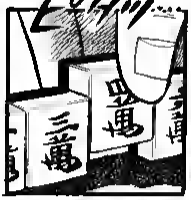
AKAGI'S HAND
カミ
WHEN I CAN'T DO IT MYSELF
I DON'T NEED TO DWELL ON WINNING, MYSELF
NOW, THIS TURN.
HEH HEH
二萬
二萬
五萬
南
西
ピクッ…
I'LL HAVE THE OTHER PERSON TELL ME
チラ
HEH HEH SO THAT'S THE SUIT HE WANTS
…

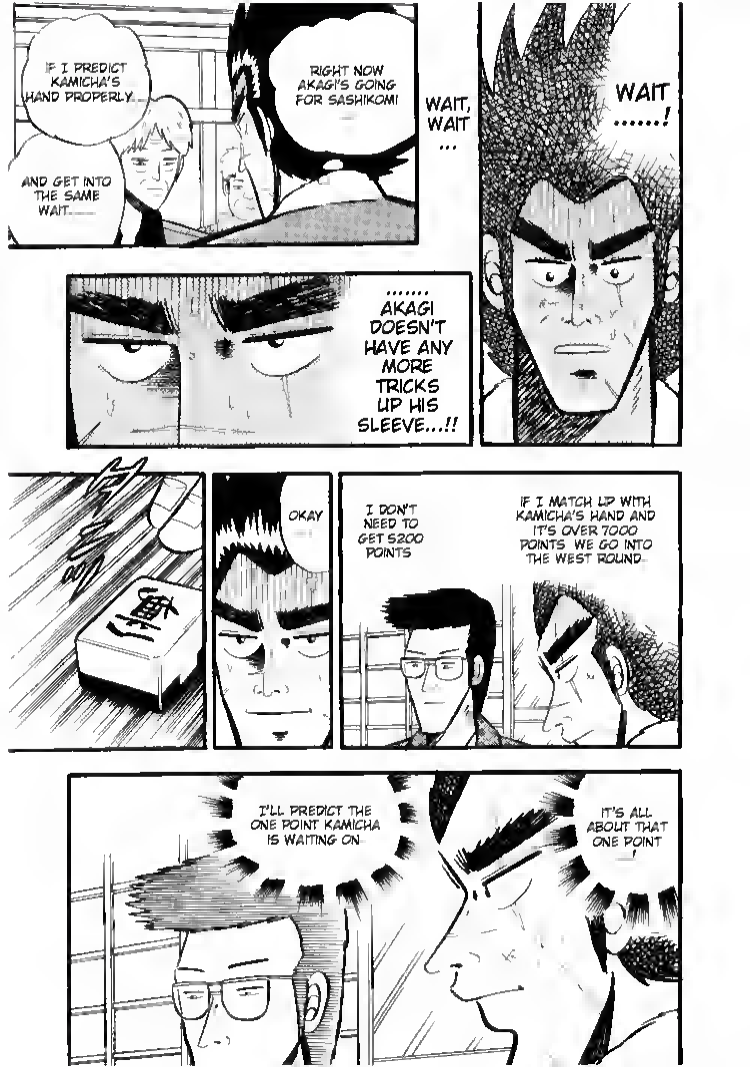




TO GET THIS HAND UP TO 5200 POINTS, I NEED TO DRAW THE 1-PIN AND 9-MAN AND GO INTO TENPAI ON THE CLOSED WAIT FOR 2-MAN TO GET CHANTA !!-PEI-KOU

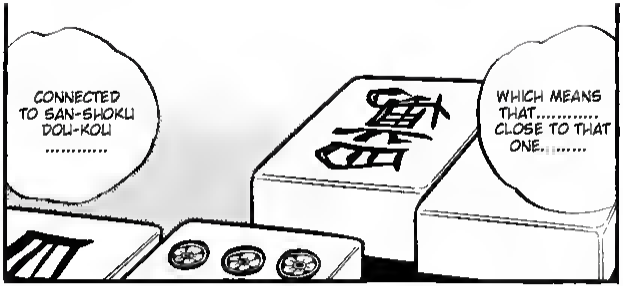



I HAVE TO WAIT WITH THIS SHAPE...




IF I PREDICT KAMICHA'S HAND PROPERLY...
AND GET INTO THE SAME WAIT...
RIGHT NOW AKAGI'S GOING FOR SASHIKOMI
WAIT, WAIT ...
WAIT .....!
.....
AKAGI DOESN'T HAVE ANY MORE TRICKS UP HIS SLEEVE...!!
OKAY
I DON'T NEED TO GET 5200 POINTS
IF I MATCH UP WITH KAMICHA'S HAND AND IT'S OVER 7000 POINTS WE GO INTO THE WEST ROUND
I'LL PREDICT THE ONE POINT KAMICHA IS WAITING ON
IT'S ALL ABOUT THAT ONE POINT

IT WENT INTO HIS HAND...!
キュ…
HE'S TAKING ONE FROM HIS HAND...!
WHAT'S IT GOING TO BE...?
I'LL BE ABLE TO ROUGHLY HOME IN ON THE WINNING TILE WITH THIS!!
HE DEALT THE 4-MAN.
PON.
ピシッ

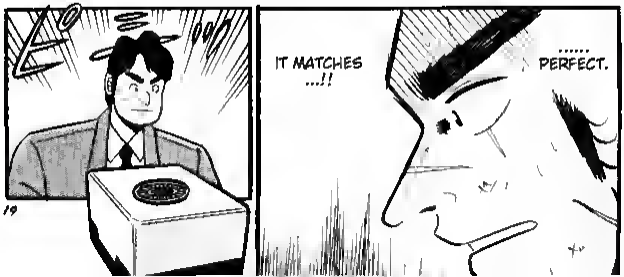

CONNECTED TO SAN-SHOKU DOU-KOU .....
WHICH MEANS THAT..... CLOSE TO THAT ONE.....

IF THAT'S WHAT IT WAS, HE WOULD HAVE WON ON THE 5-MAN THAT AKAGI GOT RID OF EARLIER.

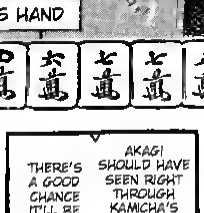
BUT IT CAN'T BE THE 3-4
HE DEALT THE 4-MAN FROM 3-4-5-6-6 OR 2-4-6-6-6 !!

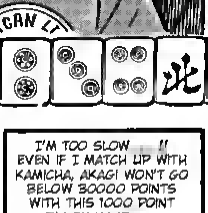
HE KEPT THE 6-PIN HERE AND DEALT THE 4-MAN, WAITING ON A SINGLE 2-MAN
IT'S THIS SHAPE !!

TEN'S HAND


IT MATCHES ...!!
..... PERFECT.

I HAVE TO GET II-PEI-KOU FOR ONE MORE YAKU...!!

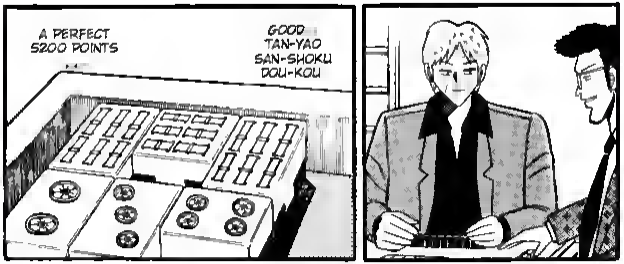

THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE IT'LL BE OVER NEXT TURN
AKAGI SHOULD HAVE SEEN RIGHT THROUGH KAMICHA'S 2-MAN SINGLE WAIT.....
SO THIS IS MY LAST DRAW.....



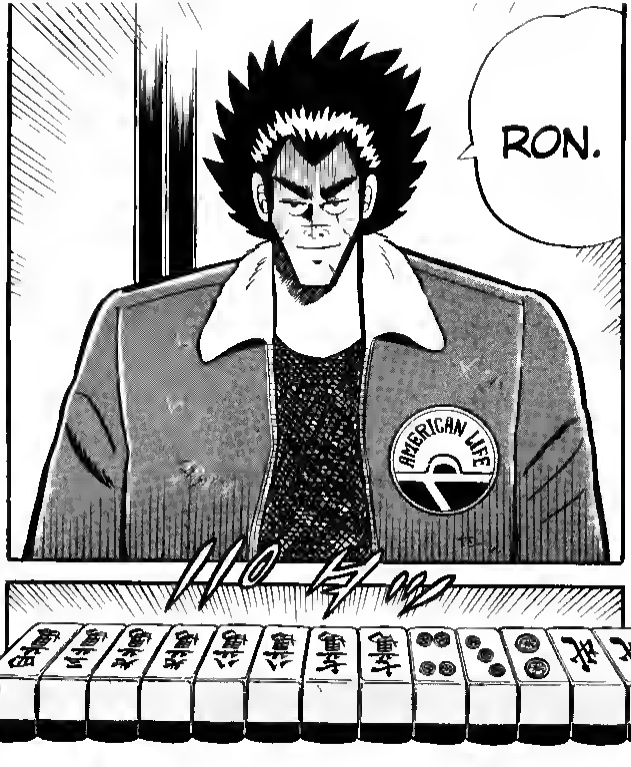
カミ!!

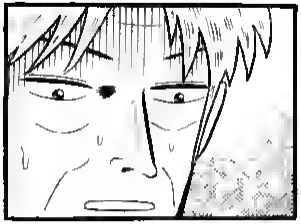
ピッ
タンッ
カミッ

RON.

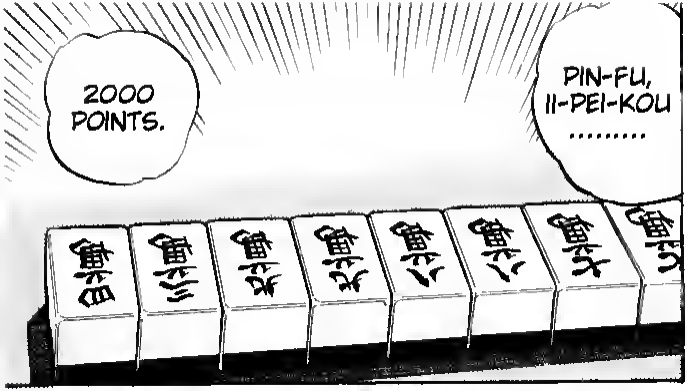

A PERFECT
5200 POINTS
GOOD
TAN-YAO
SAN-SHOKU
DOU-KOU

I
ESCAPED
NEATLY
!!


RON.
AMERICAN LIFE

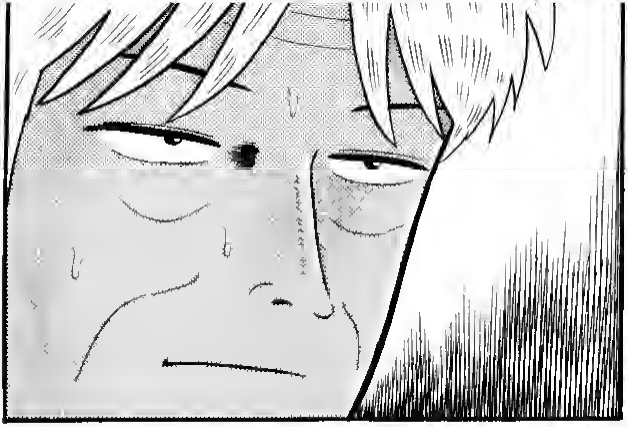


HA

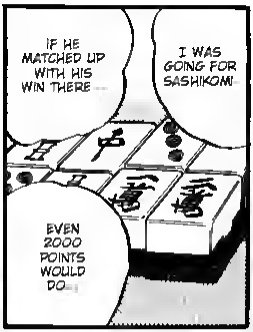


ENTERING THE WEST ROUND!!

AKAGI DIDN'T BREAK 30000 POINTS EITHER...!!
BETWEEN THE 5200 AND THE 2000 IT'S 7200 NOW...
WHICH MEANS... THAT'S IT...
AND BECAUSE AKAGI WAS AT +7000...



IT'S AMAZING THAT HE HAD SUCH AN IDEA

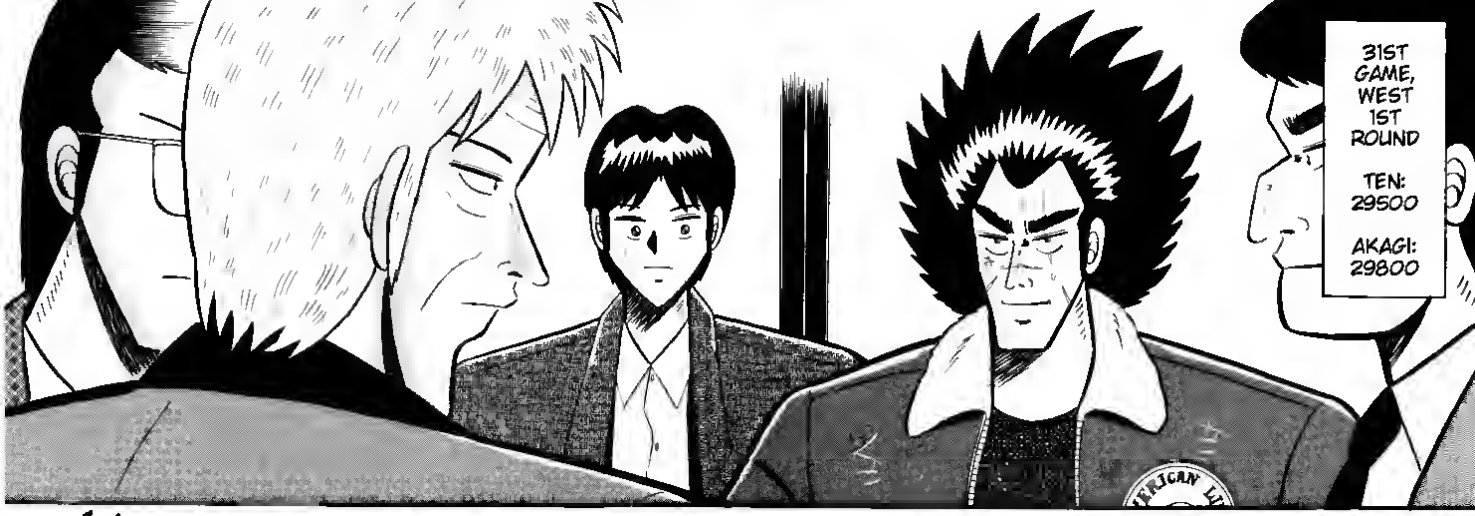

IF HE MATCHED UP WITH HIS WIN THERE
I WAS GOING FOR SASHIKOMI
EVEN 2000 POINTS WOULD DO

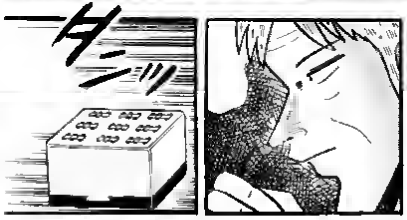
OF COURSE
ふぅ…

HUH?
GO TELL THE CHAIRMAN.
YEAH
AKAGI... WITH NOBODY OVER 30000, IT'S GOING TO GO TO WEST ROUND...
IN OTHER WORDS, HE CAUGHT ME...
I'M DROPPING OUT AFTER THIS GAME.
THIS HAN-CHAN... IF TEN OUTWITS ME
YOU'RE STILL OVERWHELMINGLY IN THE LEAD...!!
FIRST OF ALL... EVEN IF YOU'RE IN SECOND PLACE, IT'S NOT LIKE YOU CAN'T MOVE TOWARDS VICTORY!
YOU CAN'T.
RIGHT. RIGHT. YOU'VE HAD THE LEAD FOR FIVE GAMES IN A ROW.
HUH?

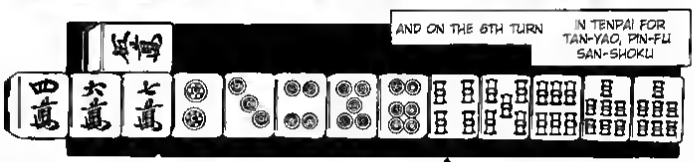
REALLY GET IT, DO YOU...
NONE OF YOU
ISN'T ACTUALLY POINTS
WHAT WE'RE TAKING AND HAVING TAKEN FROM US
IT'S PRIDE
.....

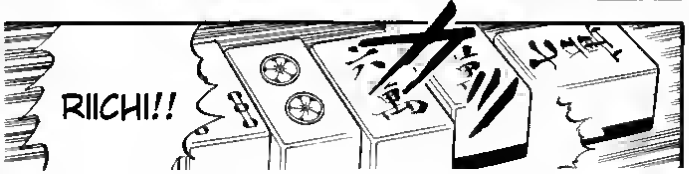
AMERICAN LIFE
CHAPTER
22
LUCK

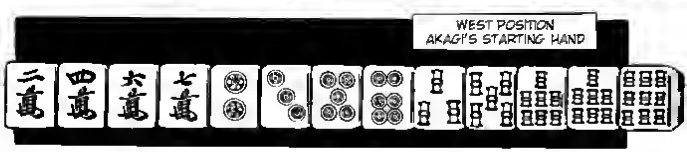

31ST GAME, WEST 1ST ROUND
TEN: 29500
AKAGI: 29800

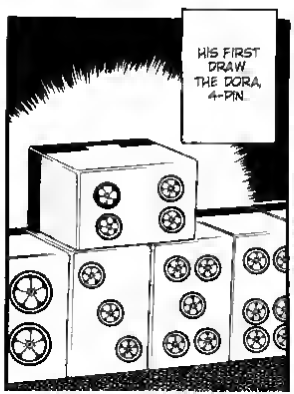


AS USUAL, AKAGI'S LUCK HASN'T DECLINED AT ALL
HE'S IN THE BEST POSITION AT THE START

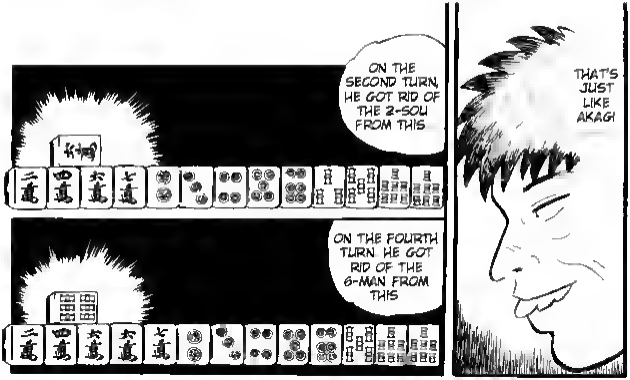

AND ON THE 6TH TURN
IN TENPAI FOR TAN-YAO, PIN-FU SAN-SHOKU

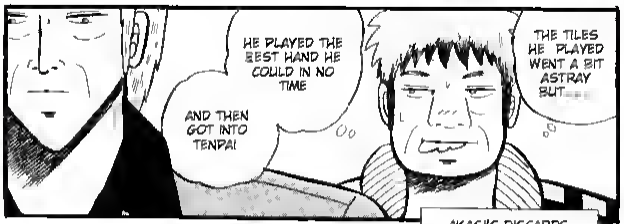

RIICHI!!


WEST POSITION
AKAGI'S STARTING HAND


HIS FIRST DRAW THE DORA, 4-PIN.

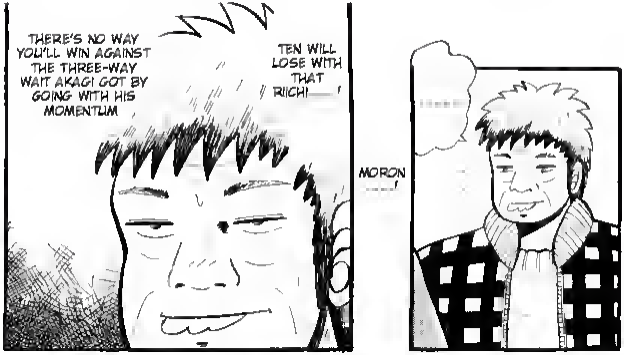
NICE STARTING HAND...
WHAT'S THIS.....

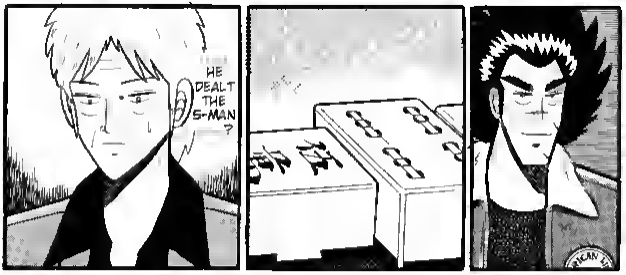

ON THE SECOND TURN, HE GOT RID OF THE 2-SOU FROM THIS
ON THE FOURTH TURN HE GOT RID OF THE 6-MAN FROM THIS
THAT'S JUST LIKE AKAGI

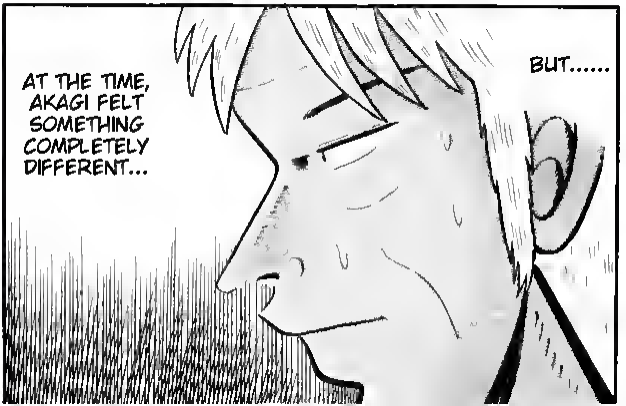

HE PLAYED THE BEST HAND HE COULD IN NO TIME
AND THEN GOT INTO TENPAI
THE TILES HE PLAYED WENT A BIT ASTRAY BUT...

AKAGI'S DISCARDS

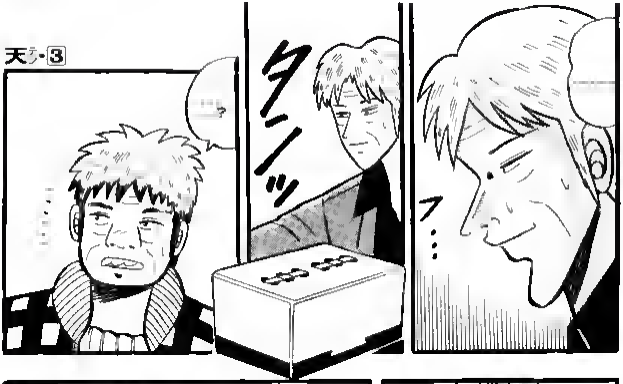
RIICHI!
AAAAND GO!!


THERE'S NO WAY YOU'LL WIN AGAINST THE THREE-WAY WAIT AKAGI GOT BY GOING WITH HIS MOMENTUM
TEN WILL LOSE WITH THAT RICHI
MORON

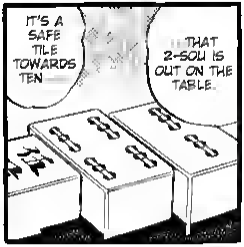

HE DEALT THE 5-MAN ?


AT THE TIME, AKAGI FELT SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT...
BUT.....

UH..!
AKAGI'S HAND
DISCARDS


タンッ
フ…

WHAT'S GOING ON…
DESPITE THAT… AKAGI LOOKED LIKE HE JUST PICKED UP A TURD…,


IT'S A SAFE TILE TOWARDS TEN…
THAT 2-SOU IS OUT ON THE TABLE.

WITH THE 5-MAN BEFORE AND THE 2-SOU NOW… THIS IS THE WORST POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENT…

THE FEELING OF HIS LUCK DRAWING AWAY FROM HIM

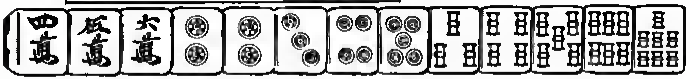
IN FACT AKAGI WAS THINKING THAT IT WAS THE WORST POSSIBLE DRAW…

THIS HAND... HAS ALREADY AVOIDED WINNING TWICE NOW.

..... WHY.....?

WITH THIS SHAPE, IT WOULD HAVE WON WHEN TEN DEALT THE 5-MAN.

WITH THIS SHAPE, I COULD HAVE DECLARED TSUMO WHEN I DREW THE 2-SOU JUST NOW



I DEALT INTO THE LAST HAND OF THE SOUTH ROUND AND WE WENT INTO THE ADDITIONAL WEST ROUND. THE MOST IMPORTANT THING NOW—

IS TO JUST FINISH THIS ROUND WITH A SOLID WIN.

YES— THE BEST POSSIBLE TENPAI; MENZEN, TAN-YAO PIN-FU, SAN-SHOKU... WHAT HAPPENED——

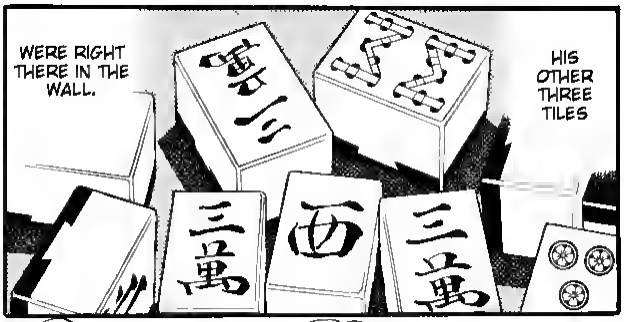
THE REALIZATION OF THE FLAWS IN THIS HAND I'VE BEEN MAKING—

AN ORDINARY MISTAKE OF MINE———

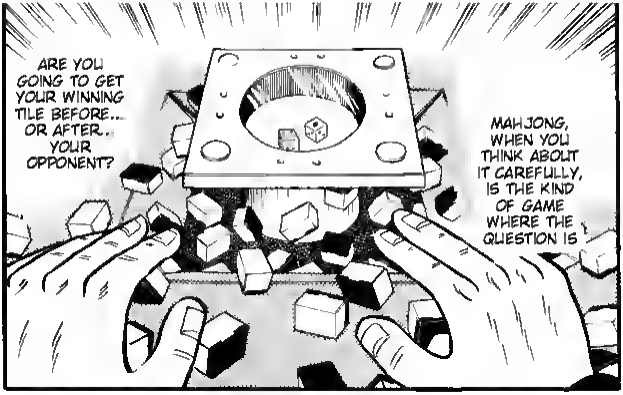
WINNING IS RUNNING FROM ME AND THE FLOW IS WITH TEN

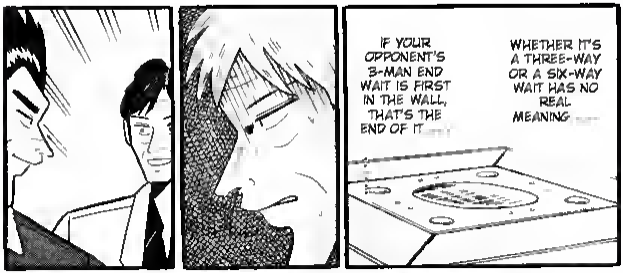
2000 FROM ALL!
RIICHI, TSUMO 4-PIN DORA
YES, I GOT IT!!
END WAIT ON THE 3-MAN
ガラッ
カチャッ
.....IT REALLY IS...!!

Ooo
EVEN BEFORE THAT, TEN GOT HIS 3-MAN END WAIT
A NUMBER OF MY 1-4-7-PIN TILES WERE STILL IN THE WALL


WERE RIGHT THERE IN THE WALL.
HIS OTHER THREE TILES

NOW... I CAN'T WIN.....
...IT DEFINITELY IS THE WORST TURN OF EVENTS
I HAD A FEELING ABOUT IT BUT.....

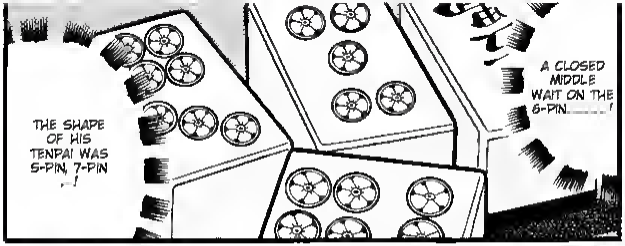

ARE YOU GOING TO GET YOUR WINNING TILE BEFORE... OR AFTER.. YOUR OPPONENT?
MAHJONG, WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT CAREFULLY, IS THE KIND OF GAME WHERE THE QUESTION IS

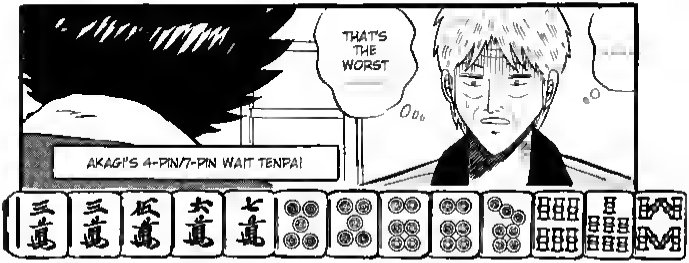

IF YOUR OPPONENT'S 3-MAN END WAIT IS FIRST IN THE WALL, THAT'S THE END OF IT
WHETHER IT'S A THREE-WAY OR A SIX-WAY WAIT HAS NO REAL MEANING

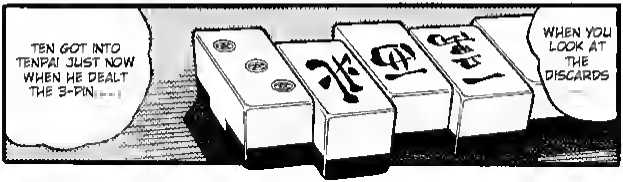
35500 VS. 26800
THE DIFFERENCE IN POINTS IS 8700.
WEST 1ST ROUND, TEN'S FIRST COMEBACK VICTORY

TEN SPEEDS UP.
WEST 1ST ROUND
SECOND ROUND AS DEALER.
TEN'S HAND
KAN-DORA IS THE S-MAN...!
KAN.

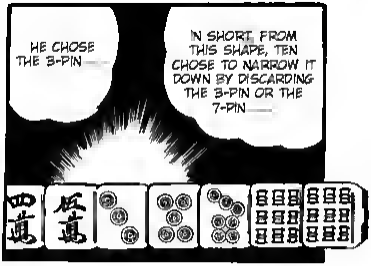
4100 FROM ALL.
HATSU RINSHAN DORA-DORA.
OH YEAH
I GOT IT!!
AMERICAN LIFE
GH——
……

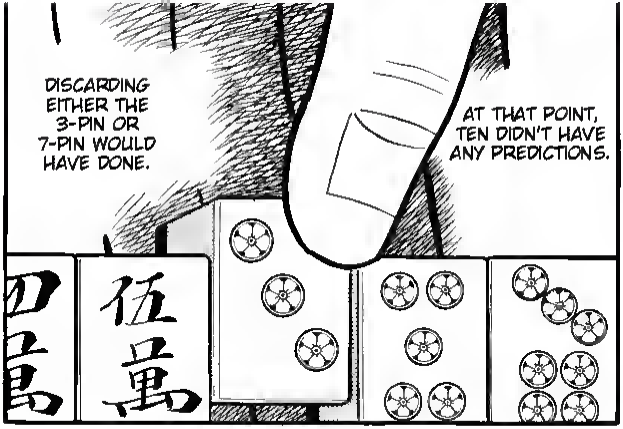

THE SHAPE OF HIS TENPAI WAS 5-PIN, 7-PIN...!
A CLOSED MIDDLE WAIT ON THE 6-PIN.....!


THAT'S THE WORST.....
AKAGI'S 4-PIN/7-PIN WAIT TENPAI

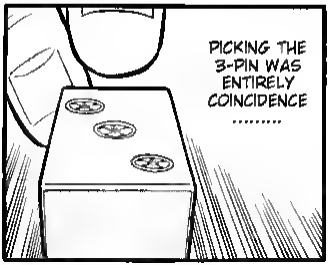

TEN GOT INTO TENPAI JUST NOW WHEN HE DEALT THE 3-PIN...!
WHEN YOU LOOK AT THE DISCARDS.....

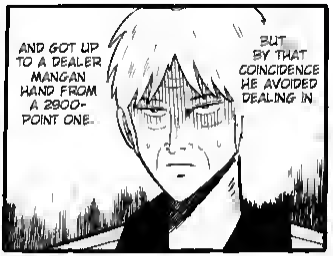
IF--- HE CHOSE THE 7-PIN, HE WOULD HAVE DEALT INTO MY HAND.....!

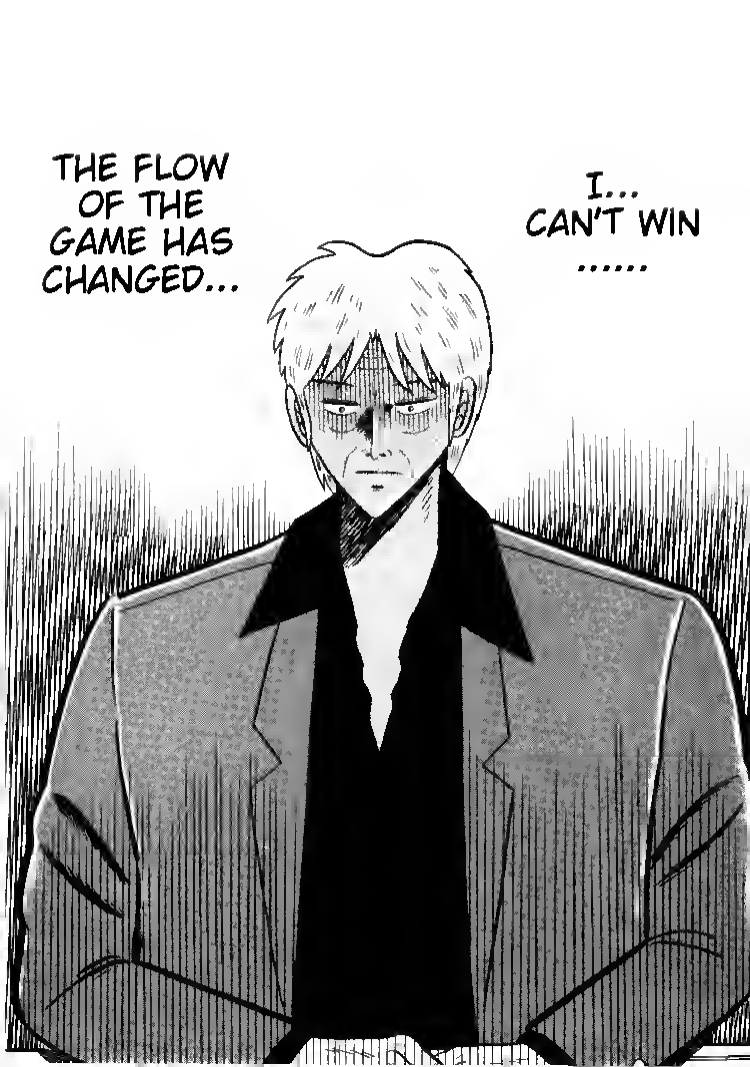

HE CHOSE THE 3-PIN.....
IN SHORT, FROM THIS SHAPE, TEN CHOSE TO NARROW IT DOWN BY DISCARDING THE 3-PIN OR THE 7-PIN.....

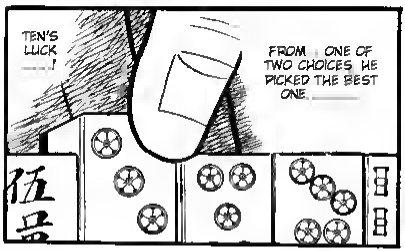

DISCARDING EITHER THE 3-PIN OR 7-PIN WOULD HAVE DONE.
AT THAT POINT, TEN DIDN'T HAVE ANY PREDICTIONS.

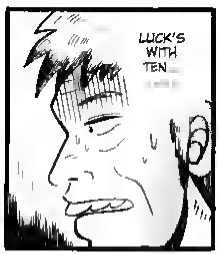
THIS
ISN'T JUST A STROKE OF LUCK ANYMORE


PICKING THE 3-PIN WAS ENTIRELY COINCIDENCE


AND GOT UP TO A DEALER MANGAN HAND FROM A 2900-POINT ONE.
BUT BY THAT COINCIDENCE HE AVOIDED DEALING IN.

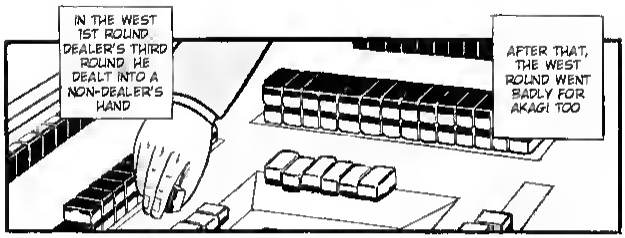

THE FLOW OF THE GAME HAS CHANGED...
I... CAN'T WIN .....

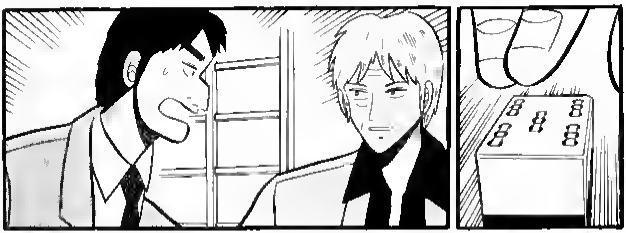

TEN'S LUCK.....!
FROM ONE OF TWO CHOICES HE PICKED THE BEST ONE.....

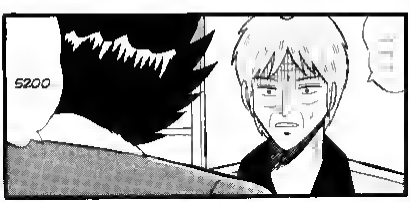

LUCK'S WITH TEN.....

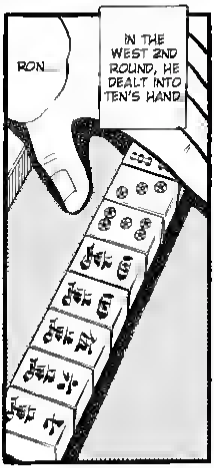
OR INTUITION..... IN EITHER CASE.....
WHETHER YOU CALL IT LUCK

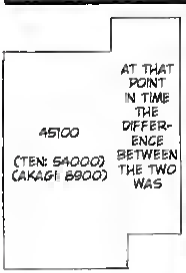
IT'S NOT SOMETHING TO MESS WITH, IN MAHJONG.....


IN THE WEST 1ST ROUND DEALER'S THIRD ROUND HE DEALT INTO A NON-DEALER'S HAND
AFTER THAT, THE WEST ROUND WENT BADLY FOR AKAGI TOO



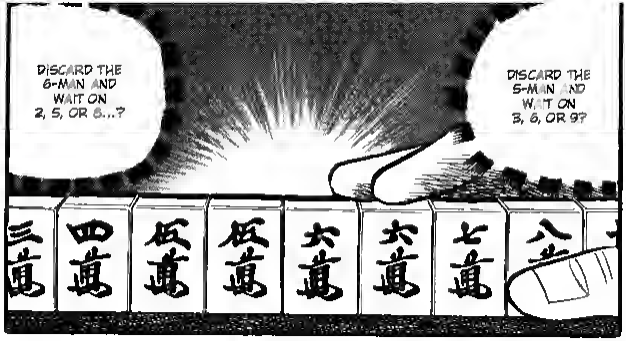

5200

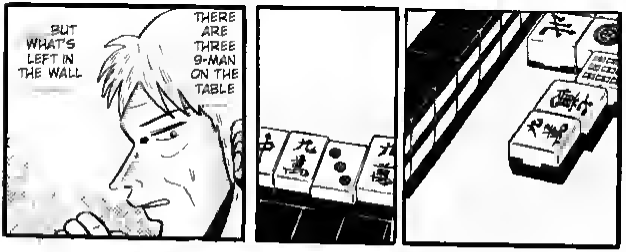

RON
IN THE WEST 2ND ROUND, HE DEALT INTO TEN'S HAND

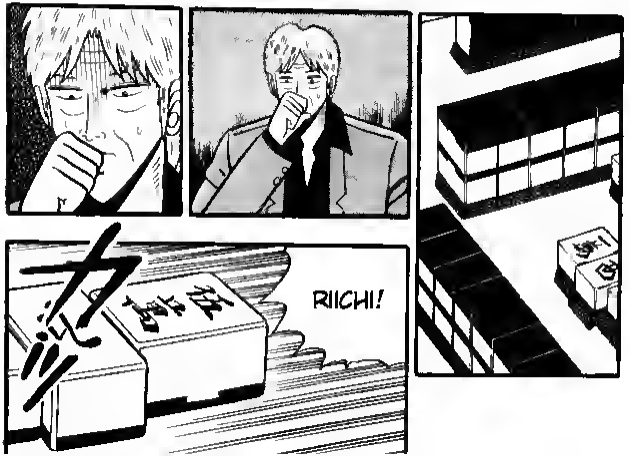

45100
(TEN: 54000)
(AKAGI: 8900)
AT THAT POINT IN TIME THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO WAS

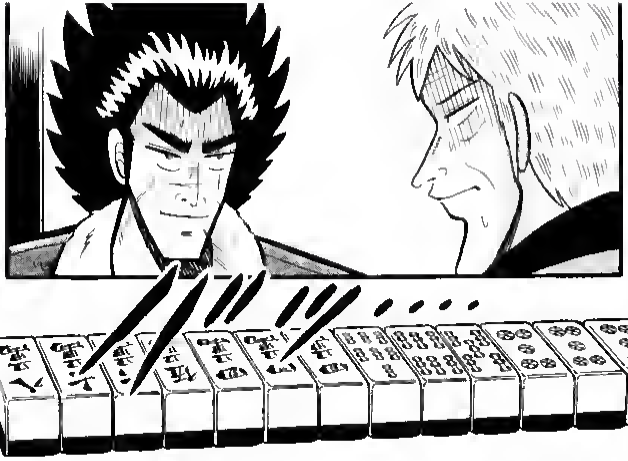
AND THEN WEST 3RD ROUND
AKAGI'S LAST TURN AS DEALER
AKAGI'S STARTING HAND
I CAN'T LET MYSELF MAKE A MISTAKE WITH MY DISCARDS...
I'LL HAVE TO WIN WITH THIS HAND...
カチャ…
カチャ…

AKAGI'S HAND, 7TH TURN
AKAGI'S TENPAI
I CAN'T LET IT BACKFIRE ON ME ANY MORE HERE...
NOW... WHICH DO I GET RID OF...?
TON, 2 DORA, RICHI WOULD BE DEALER MANGAN
YES!

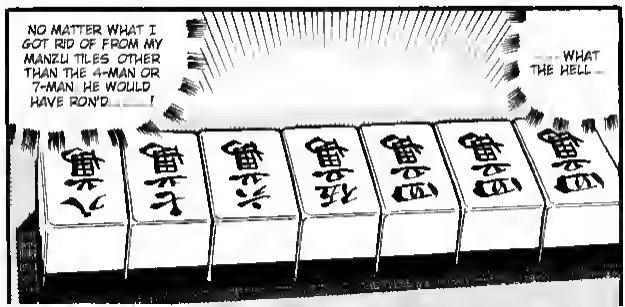

DISCARD THE 6-MAN AND WAIT ON 2, 5, OR 8...?
DISCARD THE 5-MAN AND WAIT ON 3, 6, OR 9?

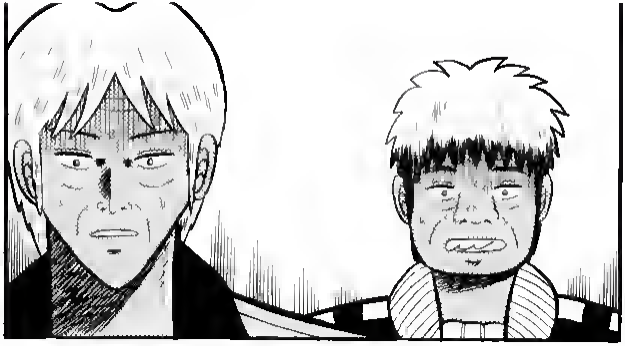

BUT WHAT'S LEFT IN THE WALL
THERE ARE THREE 9-MAN ON THE TABLE


RIICHI!



UH...
RON...!


NO MATTER WHAT I GOT RID OF FROM MY MANZU TILES OTHER THAN THE 4-MAN OR 7-MAN HE WOULD HAVE RON'D...!
...WHAT THE HELL...

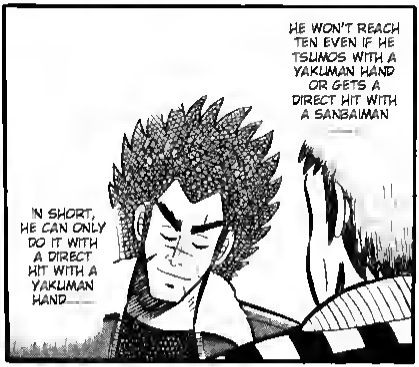


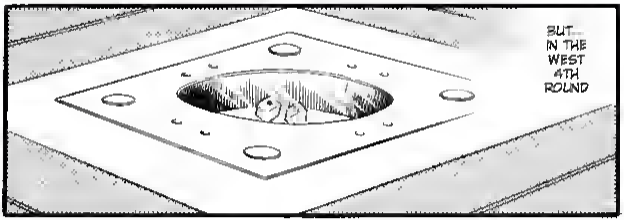
GAME'S OVER.
THAT'S IT

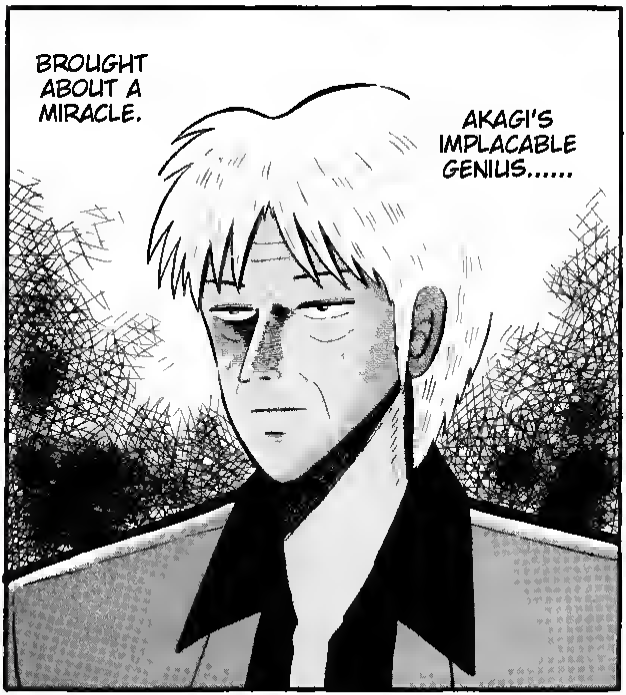
IN A PLACE WHERE IT SEEM LIKE NO MATTER WHAT HE DISCARDS HE DEALS IN.
AKAGI'S LUCK HAS DROPPED TO A NEW LOW NOW.

THAT'S BAD

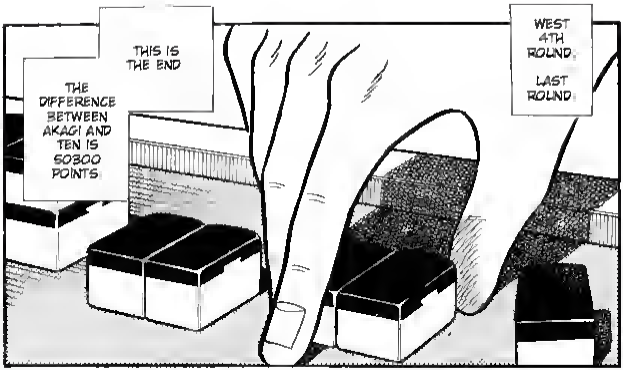
NO MATTER WHAT AKAGI DOES, IT'S 100% IMPOSSIBLE


HE WON'T REACH TEN EVEN IF HE TSUMOS WITH A YAKUMAN HAND OR GETS A DIRECT HIT WITH A SANBAIMAN
IN SHORT, HE CAN ONLY DO IT WITH A DIRECT HIT WITH A YAKUMAN HAND

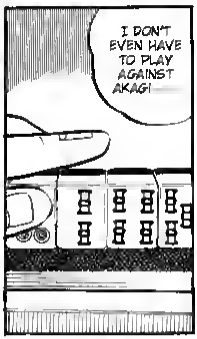

BUT... IN THE WEST 4TH ROUND


BROUGHT ABOUT A MIRACLE.
AKAGI'S IMPLACABLE GENIUS.....

CHAPTER
23
SPARK OF A
YAKUMAN



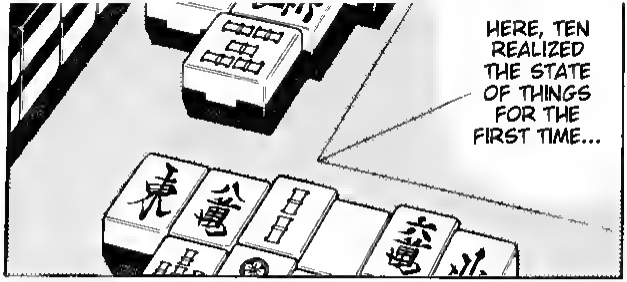
A DIFFERENCE WHERE HE CAN ONLY MAKE A COMEBACK WITH A DIRECT HIT WITH A YAKUMAN HAND

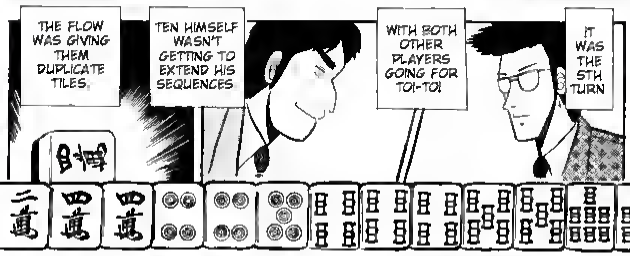


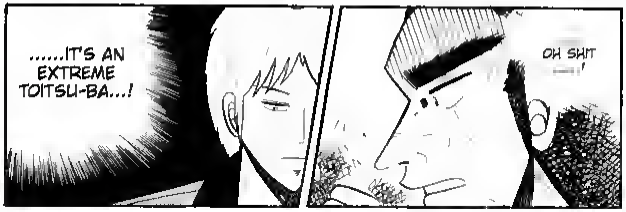
TEN'S STARTING HAND
IF I MAKE IT FAST, IT WON'T COME DOWN TO THAT.....
IF THE MATCH IS DRAWN-OUT, WHO KNOWS WHAT WILL COME UP WITH AKAGI AS MY OPPONENT.....!
IT'S A QUICK HAND.....!
ALL RIGHT...!
ASSUME THE WORST
THAT AKAGI, FROM HIS STARTING HAND
IS GOING FOR A YAKUMAN, AND WORK AROUND IT

3RD TURN
THE 4TH HATSU IS DISCARDED.
5TH TURN
KAN
WITH THAT DAI-SAN-GEN AND KOKUSHI MUSOU ARE GONE.
OKAY...
PON!
SHOU-SUU-SHI, DAI-SUU-SHI, AND TSUU-II-SOU ARE ALL OUT, NOW!
THE CHANCE OF ALL-GREEN HAS VANISHED, TOO

AN IDEAL DEVELOP-MENT.
GOOD! FROM THOSE QUICK STEPS, AKAGI'S YAKUMAN IS DISAPPEARING BIT BY BIT.
KAN!
HA!!
THE ONLY ONE LEFT IS...
CAN'T HAVE BEEN A MANZU ONE FROM THE START
NOW IT CAN'T BE A SOUZU CHUUREN-POUTOU EITHER

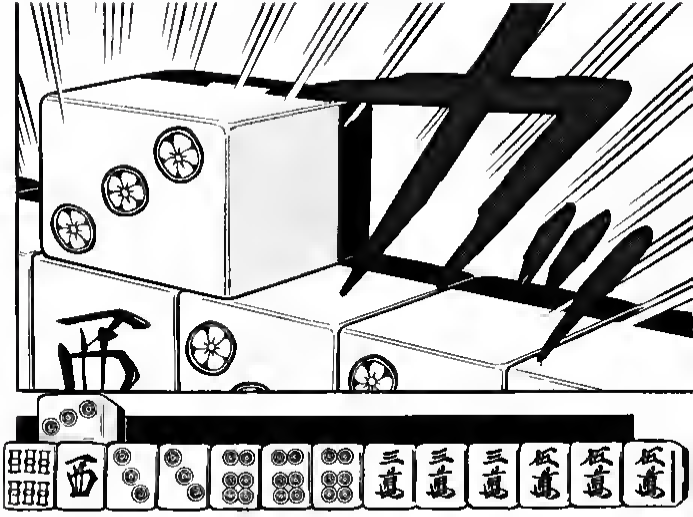

HERE, TEN REALIZED THE STATE OF THINGS FOR THE FIRST TIME...


THE FLOW WAS GIVING THEM DUPLICATE TILES.
TEN HIMSELF WASN'T GETTING TO EXTEND HIS SEQUENCES
WITH BOTH OTHER PLAYERS GOING FOR TOI-TOI
IT WAS THE 5TH TURN


.....IT'S AN EXTREME TOITSU-BA...!
OH SHIT...!

SUU-AN-KOU .....
WAITING ON A SINGLE TILE...!
I GET IT! .....
AKAGI'S GOAL IS...

THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT. THE FLOW IS BIASED TOWARDS AKAGI, TOO.
NO MATTER WHAT I DO I'M STILL IN NO-TEN?
BRINGING THEM IN!
HEAVILY
HOLDING ON UNTIL THE END!
THAT'S OUR AKAGI
AKAGI'S ONE TILE FROM TENPAI FOR SUU-AN-KOU.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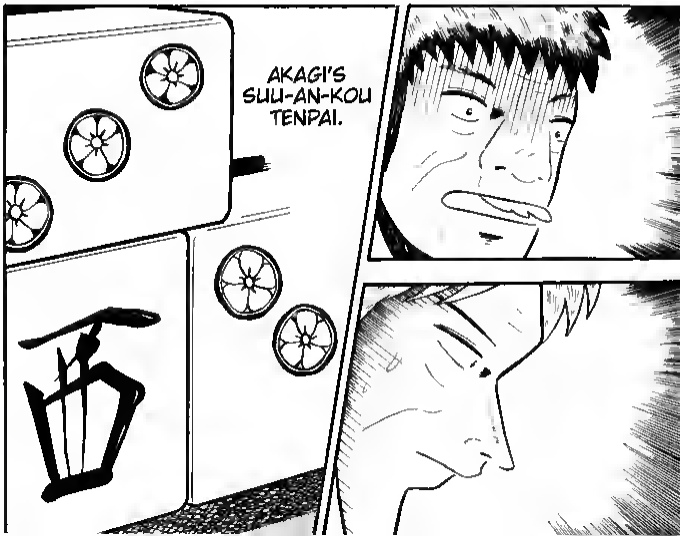
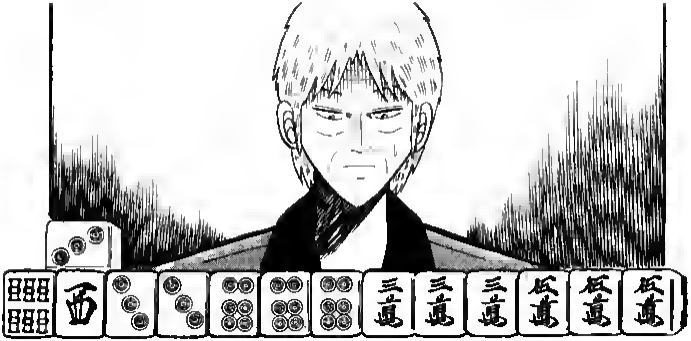

AKAGI'S SUU-AN-KOU TENPAI.
西


西
三萬
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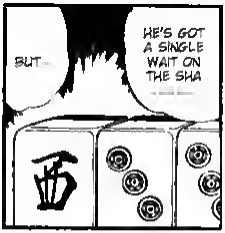
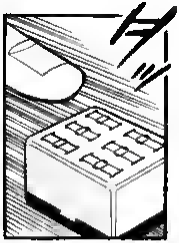
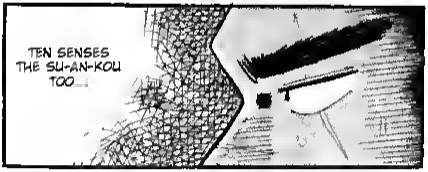
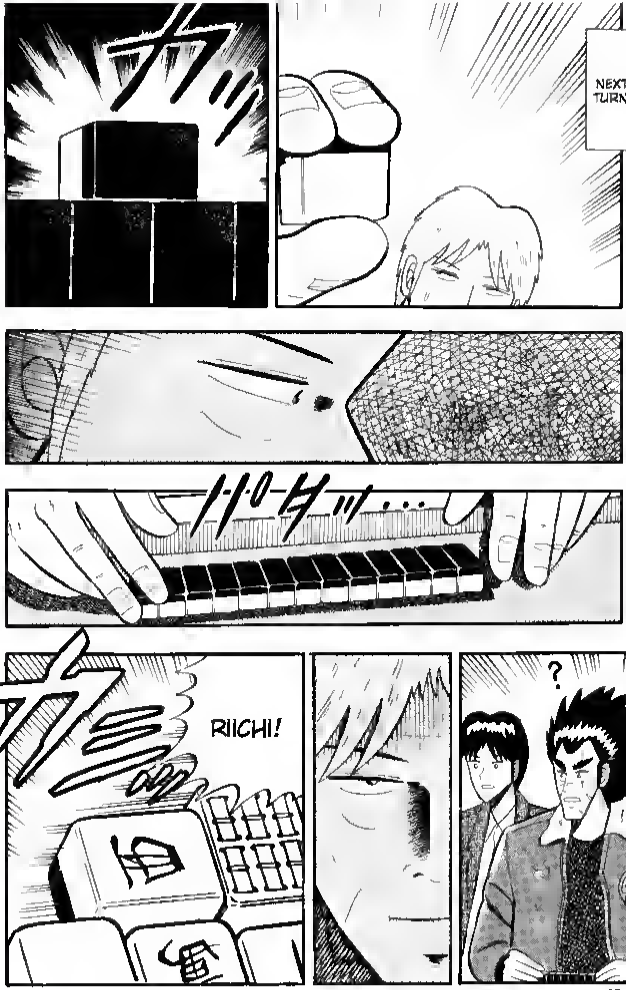

BUT...
HE'S GOT A SINGLE WAIT ON THE SHA
西



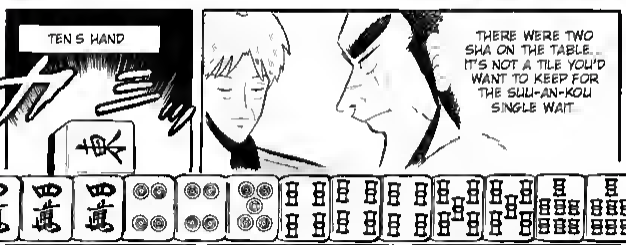
IT'S GONNA BE DIFFICULT...
HE CAN'T DEAL INTO TEN'S HAND

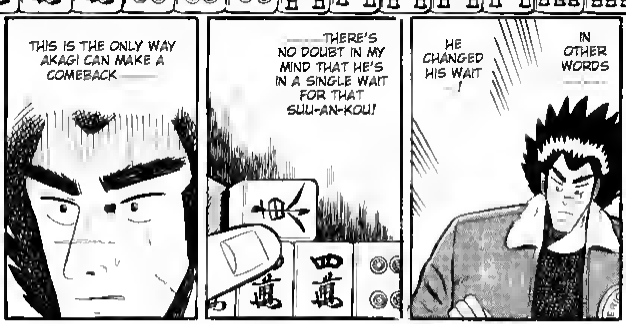
IT'S NOT ONLY ABOUT WINNING...
...THAT'S PRETTY BAD INSTEAD... FROM THIS POINT ON


TEN SENSES THE SU-AN-KOU TOO...


NEXT TURN
RIICHI!
?

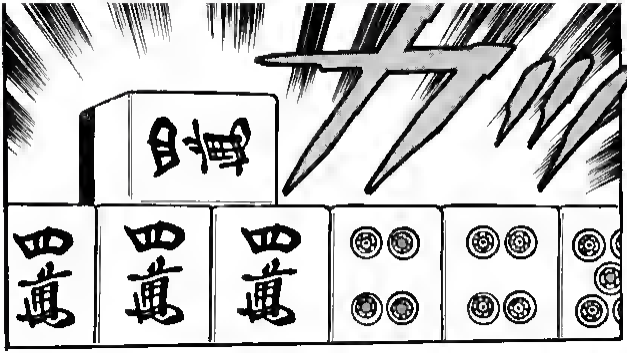
HE DISCARDED SHA AND DECLARED RIICHI...!


TEN'S HAND
THERE WERE TWO SHA ON THE TABLE... IT'S NOT A TILE YOU'D WANT TO KEEP FOR THE SUU-AN-KOU SINGLE WAIT...

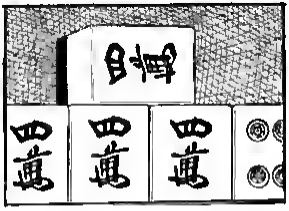

THIS IS THE ONLY WAY AKAGI CAN MAKE A COMEBACK——
——THERE'S NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT HE'S IN A SINGLE WAIT FOR THAT SUU-AN-KOU!
HE CHANGED HIS WAIT...!
IN OTHER WORDS——

AKAGI SCORNED THE SINGLE HELL-WAIT ON THE SHA WHEN THERE WERE ALREADY TWO OUT AND WENT FOR A DIFFERENT WAIT……
WHICH WAS WHAT……?
……THE ONLY PROBLEM IS WHAT'S HE WAITING ON……?
AFTER HIS RIICHI I'M AT A POINT WHERE I DON'T WANT TO DISCARD THE TILE I JUST DREW BUT……
THIS TON I JUST DREW……
THERE'S A HIGH PROBABILITY THAT AKAGI IS AIMING FOR THOSE TILES THAT WILL COME OUT……
THE CLOSED TRIPLE I GOT AT THE START
AND THE NUMBER OF TILES CLOSE TO A TRIPLE TOO… ARE HARD TO DISCARD……
SHIT……
BEST TO DRAW AND DISCARD IT RIGHT AWAY……

THERE'S NO SURE PROOF...
BUT... THAT'S ALL
IT WENT THRO-UGH
EXCEPT FOR WHEN I KNOW WHERE ALL FOUR OF A TILE IS
IT'LL BE HARD TO GET RID OF ANYTHING SINCE IT'LL BE DANGEROUS
IT COULD BE THE NEXT TILE I DRAW IN
HHH...
AND THEN ON THE 14TH TURN.
EVEN WITH A SOOOO POINT LEAD... INSTEAD I'M THE ONE BEING CORNERED
SHIT!
WHAT A GAME...!

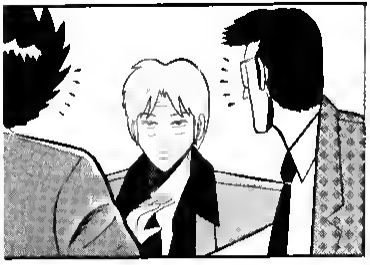

四萬
四萬
四萬

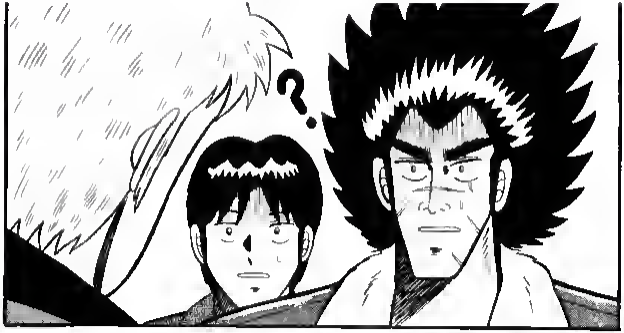
I DREW ALL FOUR OF THEM...
I'M SAVED!


四萬
四萬
四萬

NOW IT'LL END IN A DRAW AFTER I MAKE IT THROUGH FOUR TURNS!!

WITH THIS 4-MAN
IT'S A RAY OF HOPE...
I DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ANYMORE





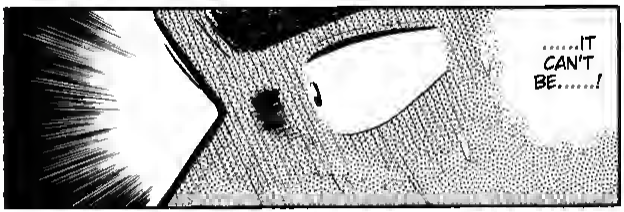
THIS 4-MAN IS IT .....

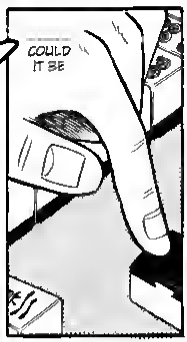
THIS IS AKAGI SHIGERU'S HELL-WAIT.
URA-DORA
MY TRIPLE IS IN THERE
BUT...!
...AIMING FOR THE HOLE LEFT BY THOSE FOUR 4-MAN TILES...!
YEAH...
THAT DOESN'T MAKE A COMEBACK VICTORY WITH RICHI, TAN-YAO SAN-AN-KOU. IT STOPS AT MANGAN...!

FIRST OF ALL, 3 DORA
HANEMAN.

URGH

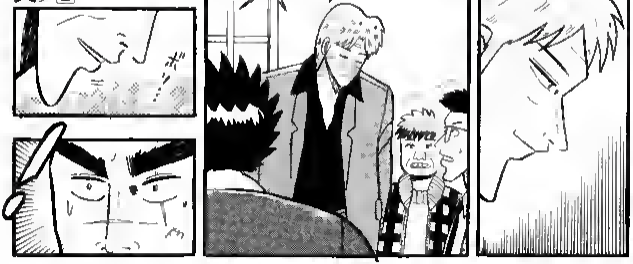
BAIMAN
WITH THIS PAIR 6 DORA

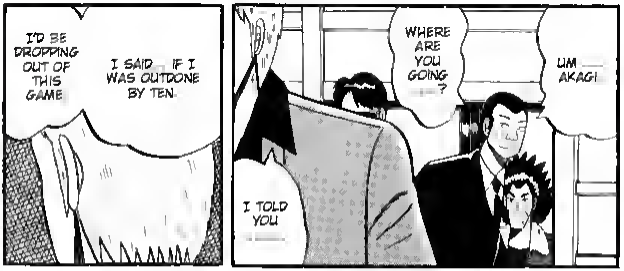

.....IT CAN'T BE.....!


COULD IT BE

IT'D BE NO PROBLEM TO GET A COUNTED YAKUMAN AND MAKE AN UPSET
BUT IF HE'S USING THE TRIPLE WITH 9 DORA
THIS KIND OF A COMEBACK VICTORY EXISTS —!?

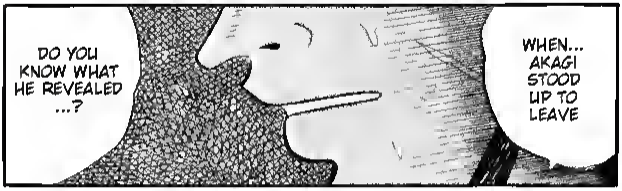
はぁ
.....
HE DIDN'T MAKE IT .....!
HE DIDN'T OVERTURN THE GAME
HE ONLY GOT TO BAIMAN
TEN HELD ON

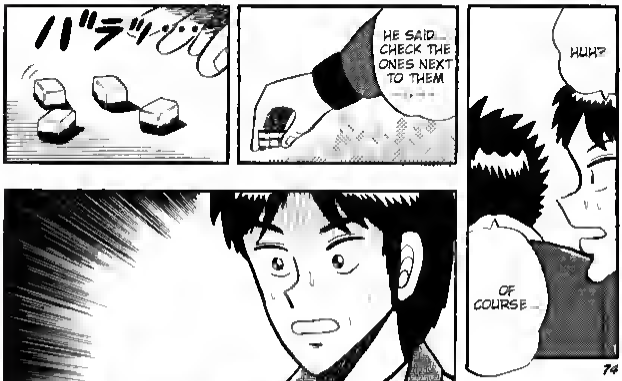


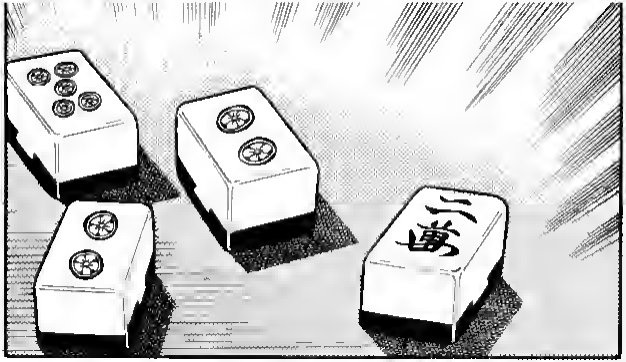

I'D BE DROPPING OUT OF THIS GAME
I SAID IF I WAS OUTDONE BY TEN.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING ?
UM AKAGI
I TOLD YOU

PLEASE WAIT A MINUTE
WAIT
THAT'S ALL
UH
AKAGI!

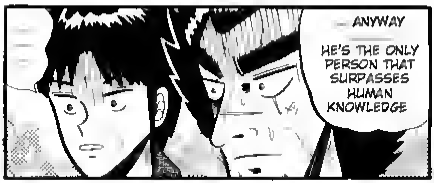
AS IF HE'D EVER GET THAT MANY DORA FOR HIS TRIPLE BY ACCIDENT LIKE THAT
WELL... AND RIGHTLY SO...
HIROYUKI
YOU MADE IT

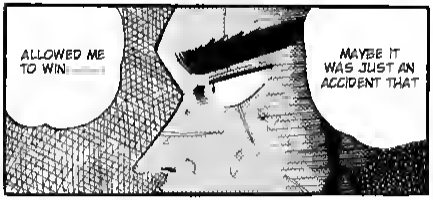

DO YOU KNOW WHAT HE REVEALED ...?
WHEN... AKAGI STOOD UP TO LEAVE


バラ...
HE SAID... CHECK THE ONES NEXT TO THEM
HUH?
OF COURSE...


二萬

URGH


ANYWAY
HE'S THE ONLY PERSON THAT SURPASSES HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

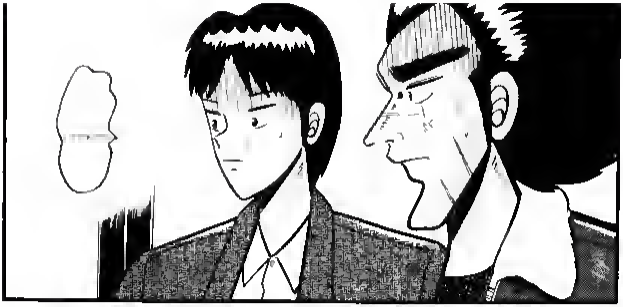

ALLOWED ME TO WIN
MAYBE IT WAS JUST AN ACCIDENT THAT

HE'D HAVE GOTTEN ALL THREE HERE
IF IT HAD BEEN AKAGI IN HIS PRIME
二萬
三萬
三萬
三萬

THIS WAS AKAGI SHIGERU'S SUU-AN-KOU HELL-WAIT.
YES..... MY TRIPLE IS IN THERE .....

CHAPTER 24
DEMONS PLAY

THIS WAS AKAGI SHIGERU'S SUU-AN-KOU HELL-WAIT.
YES, MY TRIPLE IS IN THERE.



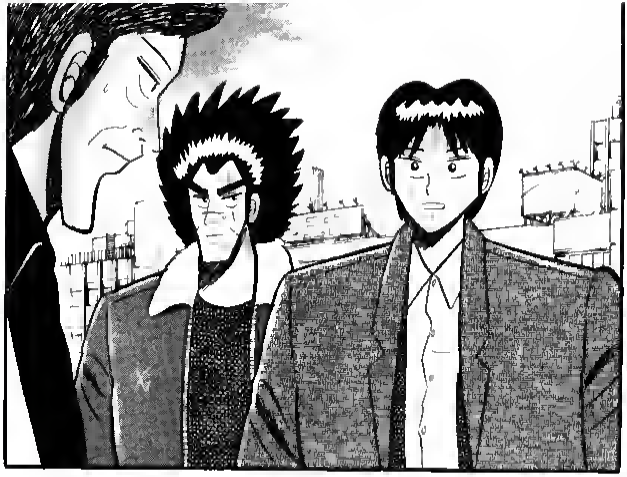
THEIR REP PLAYERS SOON COUGHED UP ALL OF THE CASH AKAGI'S WINS HAD SAVED UP...
OF COURSE THERE WAS NOBODY ABOVE AKAGI
THEIR OPPONENT'S SIDE WAS IN A RUSH TO FIND A REP PLAYER, BUT...
AKAGI DIDN'T RETURN AFTER THAT...

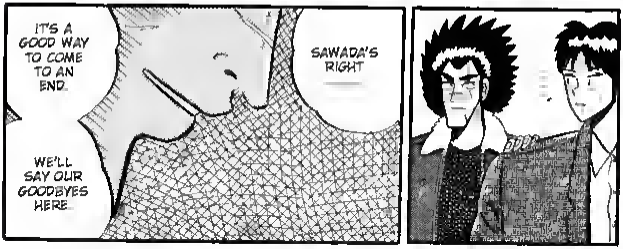
SAWADA HAD GOTTEN THROUGH THE CRISIS...
OVER-WHELMING VICTORY WENT TO TEN AND SAWADA'S SIDE
IN THE END, AFTER THE GAME OF 60 HAN-CHAN SESSIONS OVER 3 DAYS

MORNING AFTER THE MATCH
National
I'LL BE SURE TO REPAY YOU SOMEDAY
I REALLY OWE YOU A LOT
TEN HIROYUKI
AH... IT'S REALLY NOTHING
IF ANYTHING COMES UP AGAIN.
HIRO
ABOUT THAT...

ARE FINISHED
WITH THIS YOUR REP PLAYER DAYS
THAT'S NOT IT
BECAUSE I WASN'T VERY USEFUL, RIGHT
?
YOU SHOULD GO BACK
HOW SHOULD I SAY IT

YOU'LL GET BY IN THIS WORLD
I'M SURE YOU KNOW THAT SORT OF THING
IF YOU PLAY A BIT MORE, YOUR WEAKNESSES WILL VANISH
YOUR MAHJONG ABILITY ISN'T THE PROBLEM
YOU SHOULD STOP RIGHT NOW
BUT, Y'SEE
HIRO, YOU SHOULD BREAK YOUR TIES WITH TEN AND I
YOU CAN GO TO UNIVERSITY AND LIVE A PROPER LIFE
I WAS THINKING ABOUT IT DURING THE MATCH, AND YOU SHOULD WASH YOUR HANDS OF THIS BUSINESS, HIRO
YOU CAN LIVE WITHOUT TAKING THIS UNDERWORLD PATH AND WITHOUT THIS REP PLAYER BUSINESS

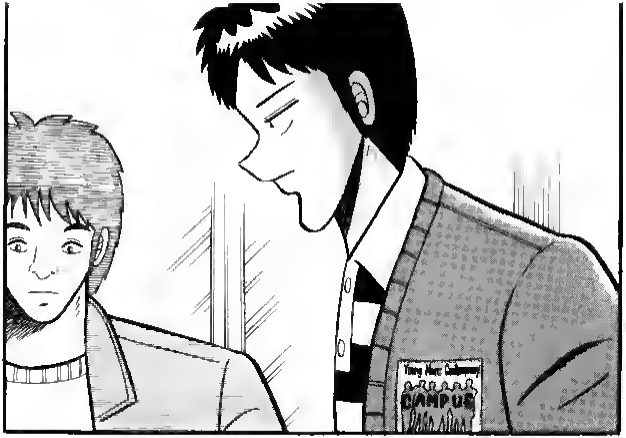


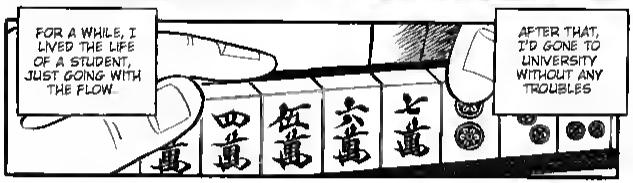

IT'S A GOOD WAY TO COME TO AN END.
WE'LL SAY OUR GOODBYES HERE.
SAWADA'S RIGHT

THEN
YOU'RE OVER-ESTIMATING ME TOO MUCH
ANOTHER CHANCE TO PLAY AGAINST A PLAYER LIKE YOU, TEN.
THERE WON'T BE
HA HA HA
THERE ARE ANY NUMBER OF PLAYERS OF MY CLASS IN THE WORLD
IF NOT AKAGI'S

THOSE IVORY TILES ARE LIKE THE BONES OF ELEPHANTS
THE BONES ARE THE TILES
THERE ARE ANY NUMBER OF EVIL, STRONG, AND BRILLIANT GUYS IN THE WORLD
DEMONS GATHER AT BONES
DEMONS PLAY AT THE CROSS-ROADS
THAT'S WHAT THEY SAY
AND IF YOU PASS THROUGH THE GAMES OF MAHJONG THAT THEY HAUNT, YOU'LL RUN INTO THEM
THEY GATHER IN MAHJONG
AND THAT WAS IT
IT WAS AN ALL TOO EASY PARTING
I DIDN'T SEE TEN AGAIN AFTER THAT
SOMEDAY... OVER A GAME OF MAHJONG
SEE YA
YEAH

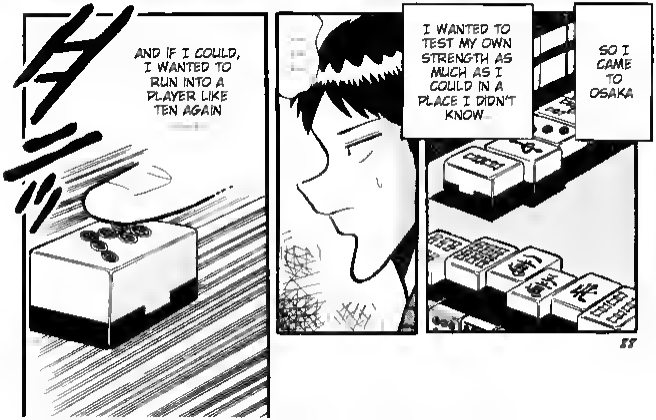
TWO YEARS LATER.
OSAKA
I CAME TO OSAKA
IT WAS IN THE WINTER, TWO YEARS LATER
THAT I CAME TO OSAKA.
麻雀
南風

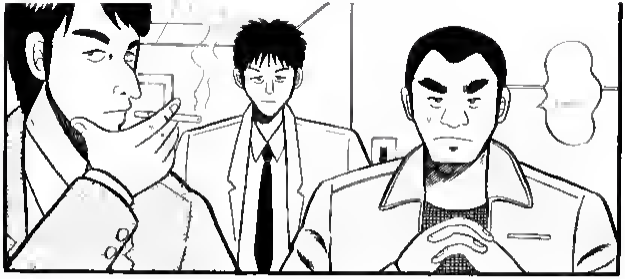

CAMPUS


FOR A WHILE, I LIVED THE LIFE OF A STUDENT, JUST GOING WITH THE FLOW.
AFTER THAT, I'D GONE TO UNIVERSITY WITHOUT ANY TROUBLES

NOT COMFORTABLE MAHJONG AMONG FRIENDS
I REALLY WANTED TO PLAY MAHJONG.
BUT... THESE LAST SIX MONTHS..... I COULDN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE.....
REAL MAHJONG

THE TENSION THAT COULD TAKE AWAY YOUR BREATH
THAT INTENSE MAHJONG I FELL FOR.


AND IF I COULD, I WANTED TO RUN INTO A PLAYER LIKE TEN AGAIN
I WANTED TO TEST MY OWN STRENGTH AS MUCH AS I COULD IN A PLACE I DIDN'T KNOW...
SO I CAME TO OSAKA



THAT'S CRAZY!
TODAY TOO, HE CAME IN SECOND ONCE, THEN FIVE STRAIGHT WINS

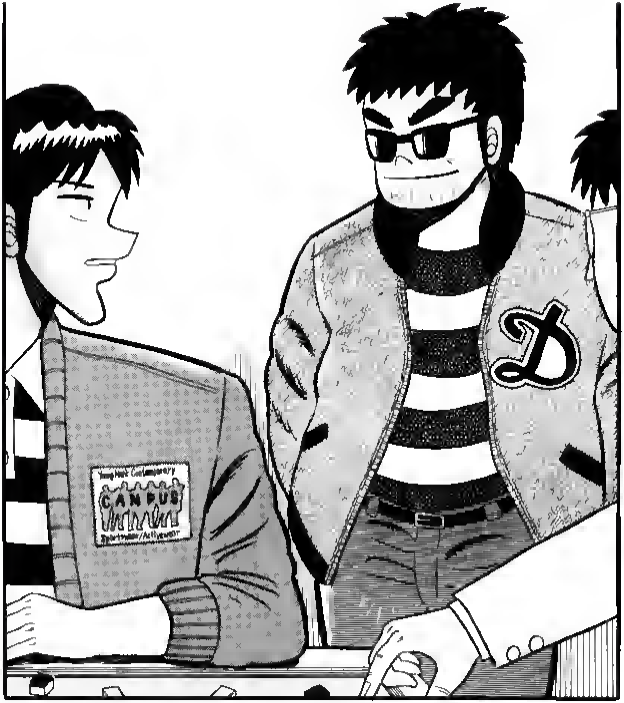
HE'S BEEN WINNING ALL THREE DAYS HERE
YEAH
THAT TOKYO KID IS PRETTY GOOD

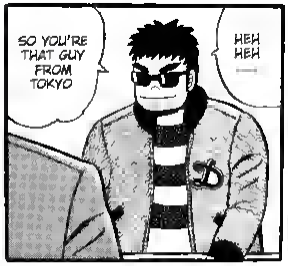
KEN!
OH, HERE HE IS

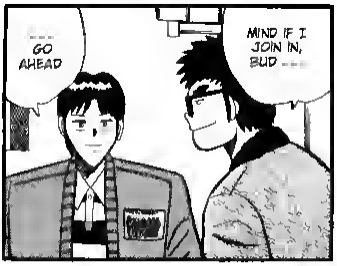
I THOUGHT WE SHOULD TOSS HIM UP AGAINST KEN HIDEO WENT TO GIVE HIM A CALL
SO THAT'S WHY
OHO KEN AGAINST THAT TOKYO KID THAT'D BE INTERESTING

HMMM.

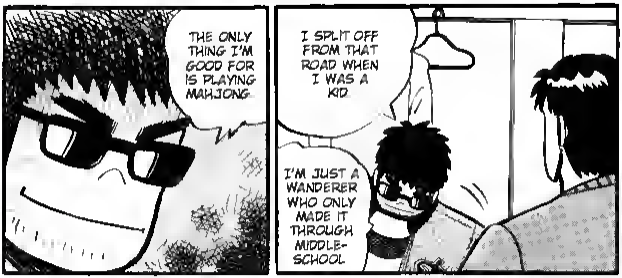
GO TO THE TABLE BY THE WINDOW
GOOD TIMING, THAT TABLE'S JUST FINISHED A GAME
THAT TOKYO KID'S GETTING CARRIED AWAY

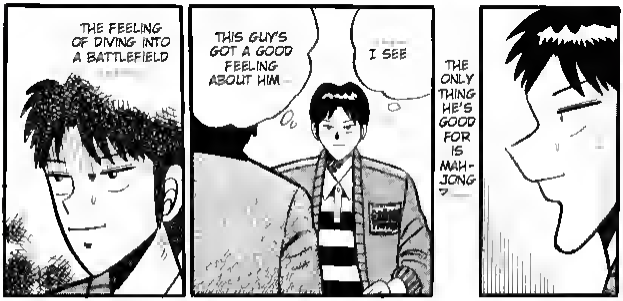

CANDUS


SO YOU'RE THAT GUY FROM TOKYO
HEH HEH

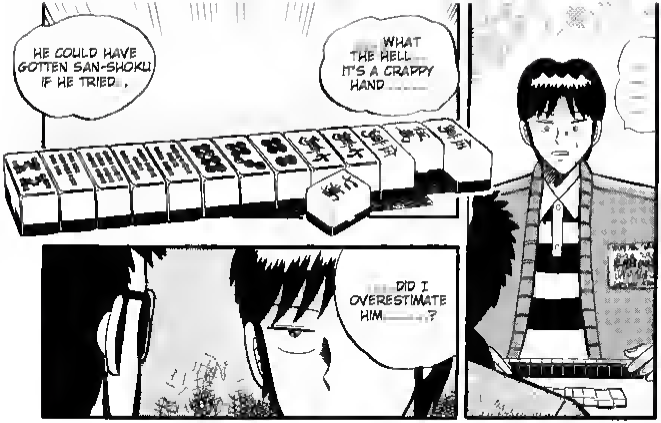

GO AHEAD
MIND IF I JOIN IN, BUD

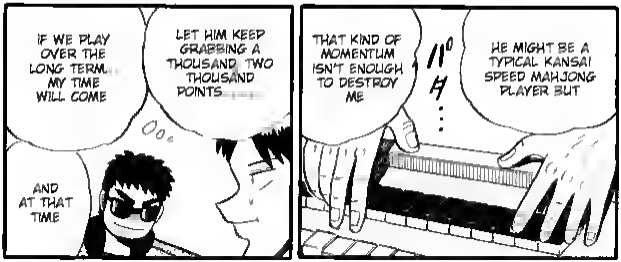
ARE YOU A STUDENT
NAH
I HEAR YOU'VE BEEN DOING GOOD, HAVING AROUND THE MAHJONG PARLOR THE LAST FEW DAYS

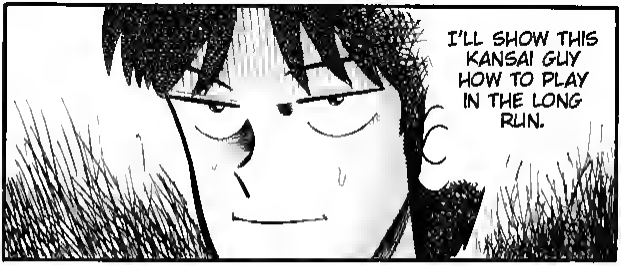

THE ONLY THING I'M GOOD FOR IS PLAYING MAHJONG
I SPLIT OFF FROM THAT ROAD WHEN I WAS A KID
I'M JUST A WANDERER WHO ONLY MADE IT THROUGH MIDDLE-SCHOOL


THE FEELING OF DIVING INTO A BATTLEFIELD
THIS GUY'S GOT A GOOD FEELING ABOUT HIM
I SEE
THE ONLY THING HE'S GOOD FOR IS MAH-JONG

PON!
EAST 1ST ROUND
CALLING ON MIDDLE TILES EVEN WHEN HE'S NOT DEALER.
TOI-TOI, I GUESS
OH?
TSUMO.
6TH TURN


HE COULD HAVE GOTTEN SAN-SHOKU IF HE TRIED...
WHAT THE HELL... IT'S A CRAPPY HAND.....
DID I OVERESTIMATE HIM.....?

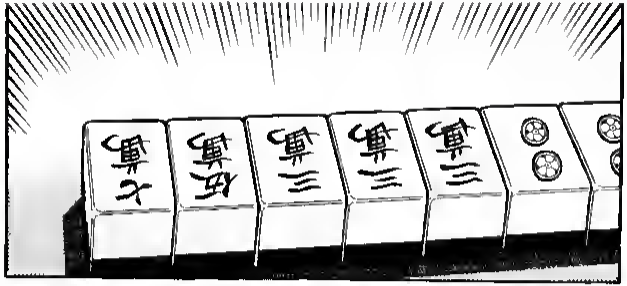

IF WE PLAY OVER THE LONG TERM... MY TIME WILL COME
LET HIM KEEP GRABBING A THOUSAND TWO THOUSAND POINTS.....
AND AT THAT TIME
THAT KIND OF MOMENTUM ISN'T ENOUGH TO DESTROY ME
11°
H.....
HE MIGHT BE A TYPICAL KANSAI SPEED MAHJONG PLAYER BUT

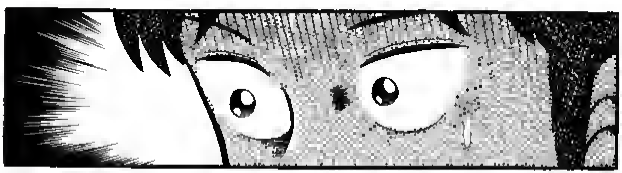

I'LL SHOW THIS KANSAI GUY HOW TO PLAY IN THE LONG RUN.

CHII!
EAST 2ND ROUND
THE THING TO WATCH OUT FOR IS THE DORA.
LOOKS LIKE TAN-YAO
Ooo
AGAIN, HE'S TAKING IT ALL OF A SUDDEN ON A TWO-SIDED WAIT
SO IT'S NOT THE DORA ... COULD BE CHIN-ITSU WITH THE SOUZU TILES ...
HE PLAY-ED THE DORA !

IT'S NOT EVEN CHIN-ITSU...
3RD TURN
THIS IS MESSED UP.....
SURE FAST IS FAST, BUT...
THIS WOULD ORDINARILY BE A CRAPPY HAND...
THIS IS LIKE SOME KIND OF SPOT-THE-DIFFERENCE GAME— HE JUST KEEPS GOING WITHOUT EVEN THE DORA
AND HAS DISDAIN FOR YAKU, TOO
.....WHAT THE HELL'S UP WITH THIS GUY.....!

HIROYUKI'S HAND ON THE 8TH TURN
GET RID OF THE 4-MAN OR 6-MAN AND I'M IN TENPAI
KEN'S DISCARDS
IF I DO DEAL IN, IT'LL BE CHEAP
THAT'S IT, TOKYO!!

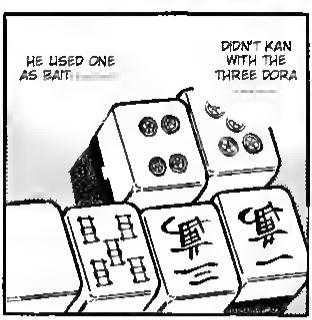


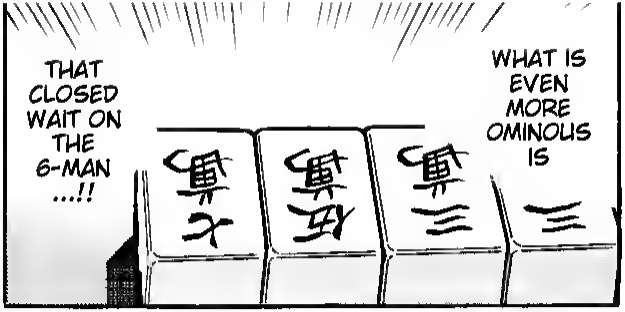


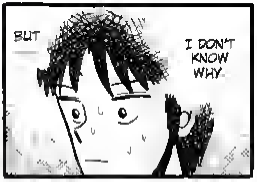
HE !!

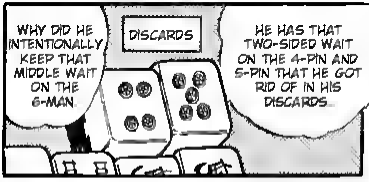
TAN-YAO, 3 DORA
MANGAN

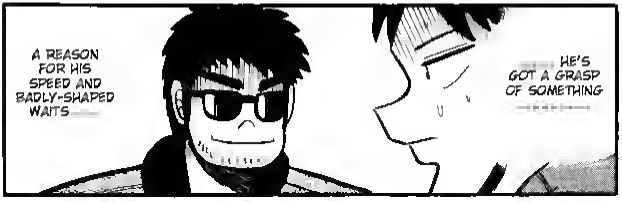
BUT

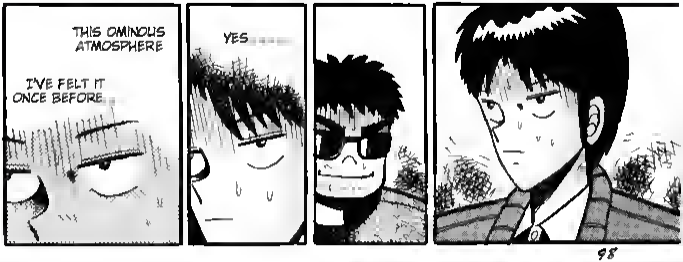

HE USED ONE AS BAIT
DIDN'T KAN WITH THE THREE DORA

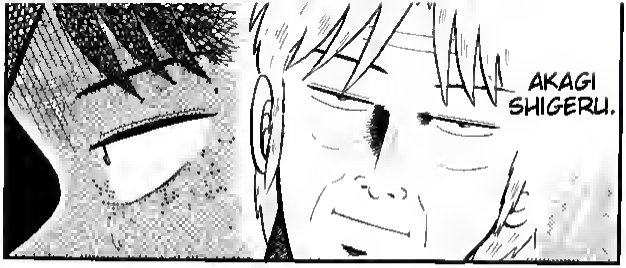

THAT CLOSED WAIT ON THE 6-MAN ...!!
WHAT IS EVEN MORE OMINOUS IS

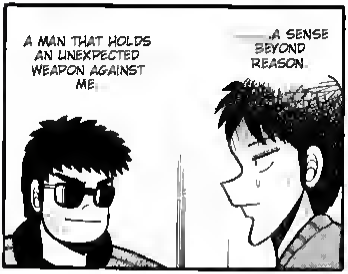

BUT
I DON'T KNOW WHY


WHY DID HE INTENTIONALLY KEEP THAT MIDDLE WAIT ON THE 6-MAN
DISCARDS
HE HAS THAT TWO-SIDED WAIT ON THE 4-PIN AND 5-PIN THAT HE GOT RID OF IN HIS DISCARDS

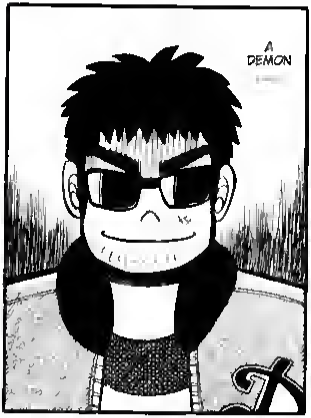

A REASON FOR HIS SPEED AND BADLY-SHAPED WAITS
HE'S GOT A GRASP OF SOMETHING

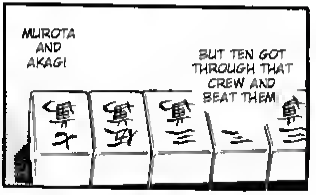

THIS OMINOUS ATMOSPHERE
I'VE FELT IT ONCE BEFORE
YES


AKAGI SHIGERU.

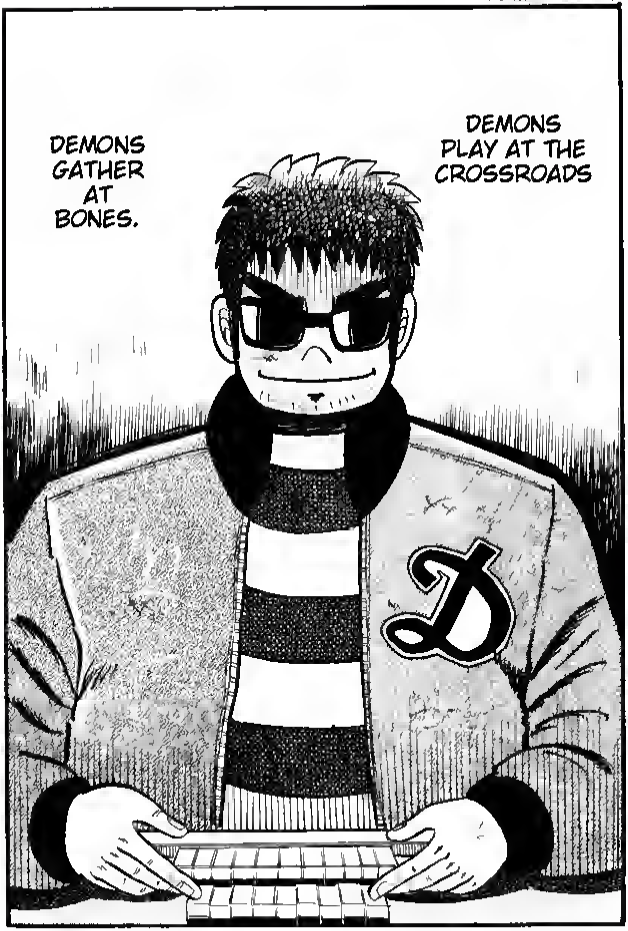

A MAN THAT HOLDS AN UNEXPECTED WEAPON AGAINST ME.
A SENSE BEYOND REASON.

OF COURSE THE SCALE OF IT IS DIFFERENT BUT
HE'S GOT THE SAME QUALITY AS AKAGI——!


A DEMON


MUROTA AND AKAGI
BUT TEN GOT THROUGH THAT CREW AND BEAT THEM

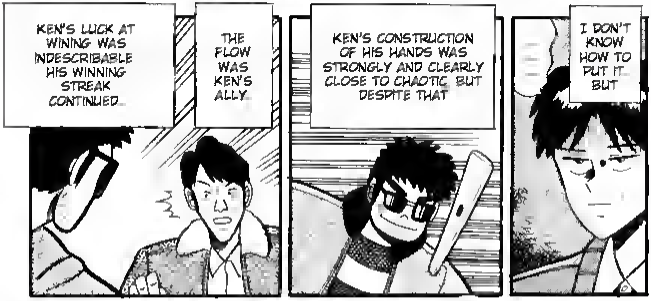
WHO TEN WAS TALKING ABOUT——?
HAVE I FINALLY MET


DEMONS GATHER AT BONES.
DEMONS PLAY AT THE CROSSROADS

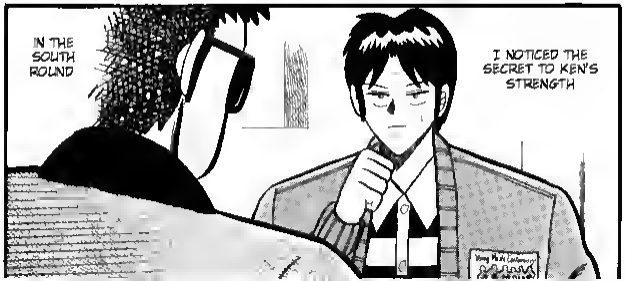
CHAPTER
25
THEORY OF THE
DEMON
Young Ma
Sports Wear

A GAME OF MAHJONG I PLAYED WITH KEN IN OSAKA.
KEN WAS UNMATCHED.
IN THE END, IN EAST ROUND

KEN WAS PERFECTLY ACTING WITH THE FLOW
I FINALLY GOT A TSUMO WIN IN EAST 4TH, BUT

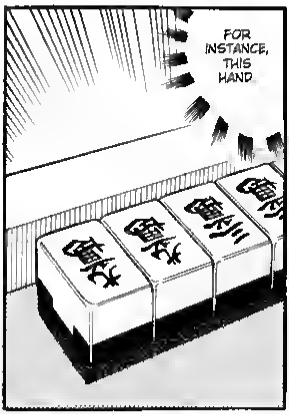

KEN'S LUCK AT WINING WAS INDESCRIBABLE HIS WINNING STREAK CONTINUED...
THE FLOW WAS KEN'S ALLY.
KEN'S CONSTRUCTION OF HIS HANDS WAS STRONGLY AND CLEARLY CLOSE TO CHAOTIC, BUT DESPITE THAT
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO PUT IT, BUT

HE HAS TO HAVE SOME PRINCIPLE HE'S USING TO WIN
THIS ISN'T A COINCIDENCE.

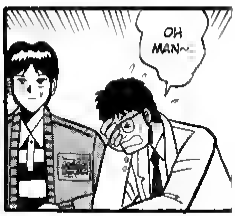

IN THE SOUTH ROUND
I NOTICED THE SECRET TO KEN'S STRENGTH

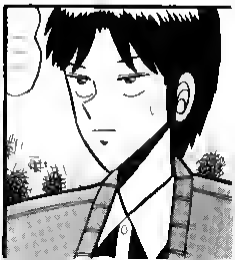
RON.

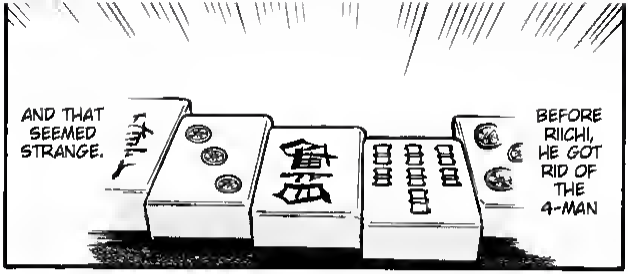
URGH

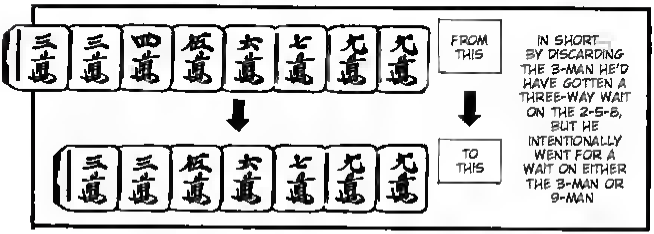

FOR INSTANCE, THIS HAND

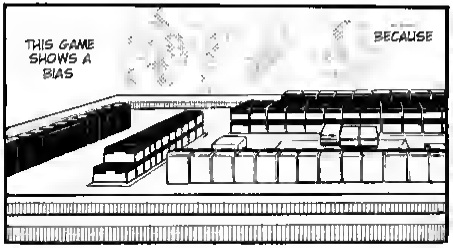
I ONLY VAGUELY FELT IT, BUT...
SURE
WITH THIS
MY PREDICTION MIGHT NOT QUITE BE WRONG...


OH MAN...

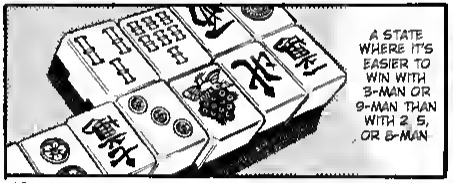


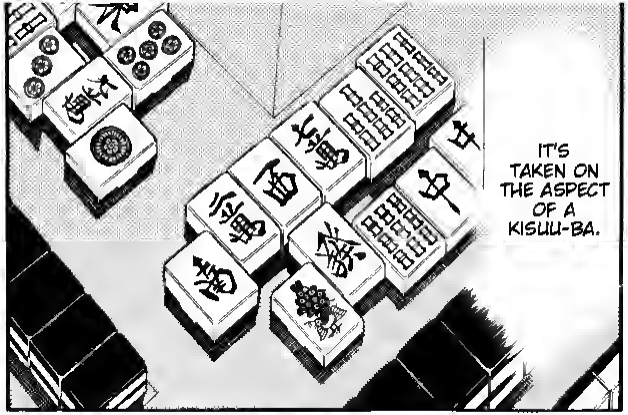

AND THAT SEEMED STRANGE.
BEFORE RIICHI, HE GOT RID OF THE 4-MAN

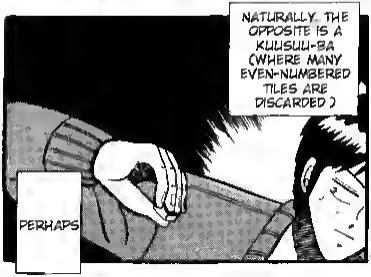

FROM THIS
TO THIS
IN SHORT— BY DISCARDING THE 3-MAN HE'D HAVE GOTTEN A THREE-WAY WAIT ON THE 2-5-8, BUT HE INTENTIONALLY WENT FOR A WAIT ON EITHER THE 3-MAN OR 9-MAN

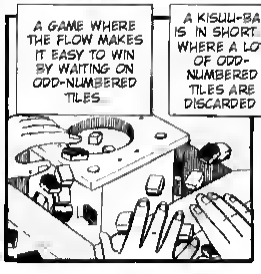

THIS GAME SHOWS A BIAS
BECAUSE

WHY ...?

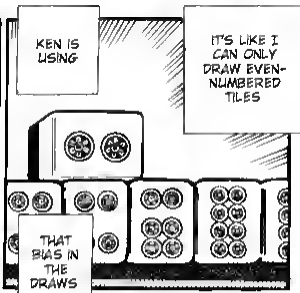

A STATE WHERE IT'S EASIER TO WIN WITH 3-MAN OR 9-MAN THAN WITH 2, 5, OR 8-MAN


IT'S TAKEN ON THE ASPECT OF A KISUU-BA.


NATURALLY THE OPPOSITE IS A KUUSUU-BA (WHERE MANY EVEN-NUMBERED TILES ARE DISCARDED)
PERHAPS


A GAME WHERE THE FLOW MAKES IT EASY TO WIN BY WAITING ON ODD-NUMBERED TILES
A KISUU-BA IS IN SHORT WHERE A LOT OF ODD-NUMBERED TILES ARE DISCARDED

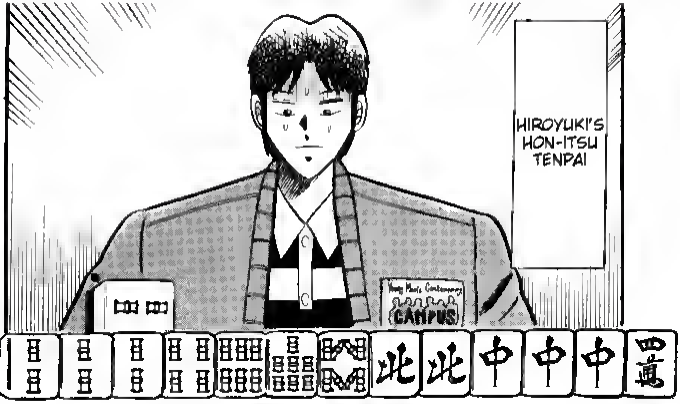
THEY'RE NOT AS DARING AS KEN.
EVEN THOUGH EVERYONE IS VAGUELY AWARE OF THE FEEL OF THE GAME


KEN IS USING
IT'S LIKE I CAN ONLY DRAW EVEN-NUMBERED TILES
THAT BIAS IN THE DRAWS

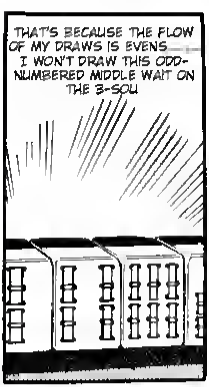
KEN DOES IT LIKE IT'S NATURAL
AND DARE TO WAIT ON EITHER OF TWO PAIRS
WHO WOULD TOSS OUT A THREE-SIDED WAIT
WHEN YOU REALIZE THIS, YOU CAN SEE THAT THE GAME REVOLVES AROUND KEN'S RHYTHM.
DRAWS THE FLOW TOWARDS ONESELF
THAT DYNAMIC-NESS
KEN RACES AHEAD TO THAT SPOT
WHEN IT FINALLY SHOWS A BIAS TOWARDS EVEN OR ODD
KEN'S SENSES TAKE CONTROL OF THE GAME
IN THE END, KEN IS THE ONLY ONE WORKING THE GAME AND THE OTHER THREE ARE LEFT IN A STATE OF CONFUSION

IN THE SOUTH 4TH ROUND, THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN KEN AND I IS 23600 POINTS.
HIROYUKI'S STARTING HAND
SHIT...
THE MOMENTUM IS AGAINST ME...
EVEN IF I CAN FIGURE OUT HOW TO WORK AROUND HIM...
I'VE COME THIS FAR... AND THERE'S NO WAY OUT...
NO MATTER WHAT I DO I'M ONE STEP TOO SLOW...
6TH TURN
BUT ON THE 3RD TURN

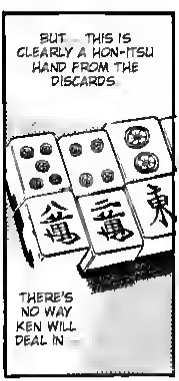
ピン
HIROYUKI'S HAND ON THE 9TH TURN
LOTS OF ODD NUMBERS IN KEN'S DISCARDS
THE FLOW OF MY DRAWS IS REALLY BIASED TOWARDS EVENS——
チラ
ピン
10TH TURN
A LOT OF EVEN NUMBERS IN HIS HAND TOO
ｸｸｸ


HIROYUKI'S HON-ITSU TENPAI!
CAMPUS

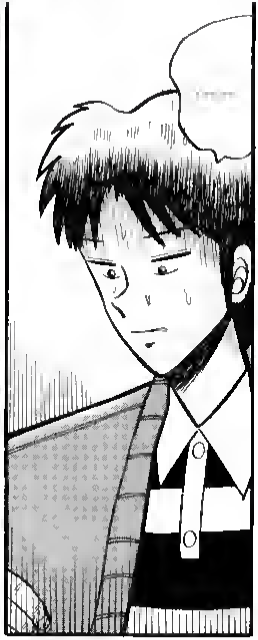
THE KIND OF HAND I CAN USE TO MAKE A COMEBACK AGAINST KEN WITH A DIRECT HIT...
IF I CAN GET THIS HON-ITSU, CHUN, RICHI, AND EVEN ONE URA-DORA, IT'LL BE HANEMAN FOR 12000...

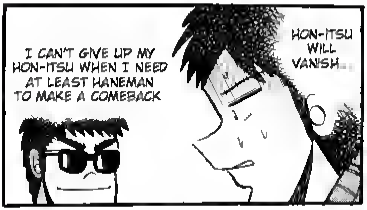

THAT'S BECAUSE THE FLOW OF MY DRAWS IS EVENS... I WON'T DRAW THIS ODD-NUMBERED MIDDLE WAIT ON THE 3-SOU.

I COULD MAKE A COMEBACK WITH THIS HAND VIA TSUMO, TOO
IF I COULD GET TWO URA-DORA AFTER I TSUMO IT'D BE BAIMAN
THAT COULD BE PRETTY HARD THOUGH...

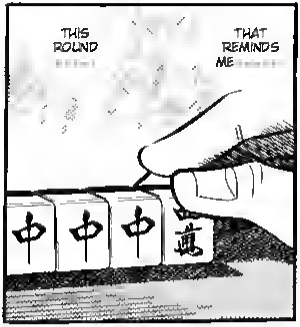

BUT... THIS IS CLEARLY A HON-ITSU HAND FROM THE DISCARDS...
THERE'S NO WAY KEN WILL DEAL IN...

IF I WAIT ON THIS 4-MAN INSTEAD, IT'LL COME OUT EASILY BUT



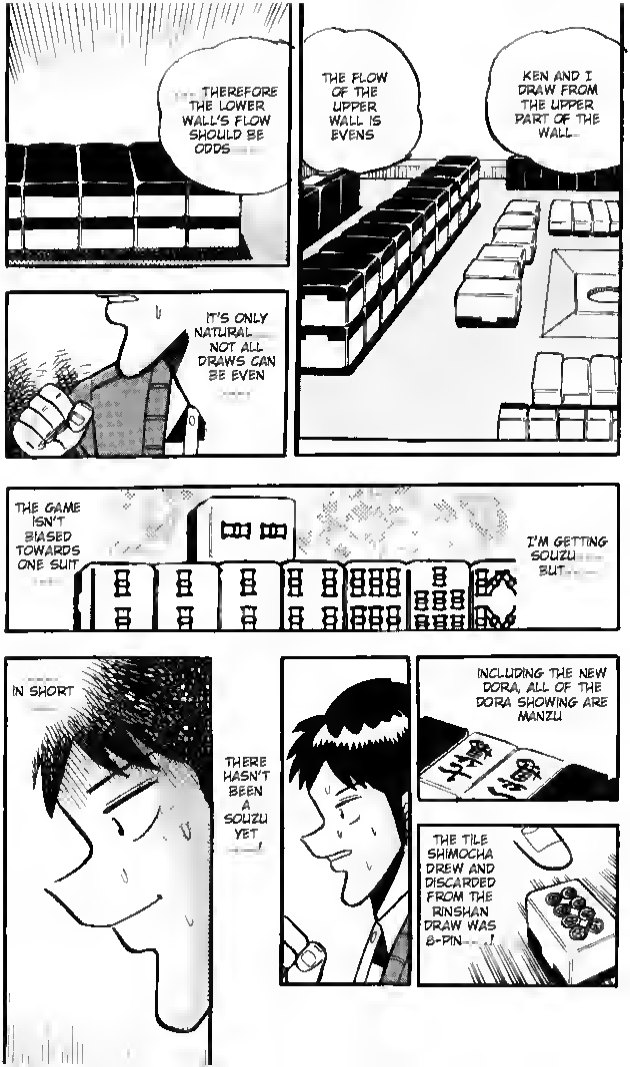

I CAN'T GIVE UP MY HON-ITSU WHEN I NEED AT LEAST HANEMAN TO MAKE A COMEBACK
HON-ITSU WILL VANISH

IS THIS A HAND THAT WILL ONLY GET AS FAR AS TENPAI?
IS THIS IT AFTER ALL?


THIS ROUND
THAT REMINDS ME

WAIT

IT'S LIKE THAT TIME WITH AKAGI, TWO YEARS AGO.
IN THE SAME STATE AS I AM NOW, STRUGGLING BECAUSE NOTHING WOULD DO EXCEPT FOR A DIRECT HIT WITH A YAKUMAN
BACK THEN, AKAGI WAS
WAIT, WAIT...!
WAIT
...!
HE GAVE UP ON HIS SUU-ANKOU.
PREDICTING THE URA-DORA'S BIAS TOWARDS THE 2-MAN

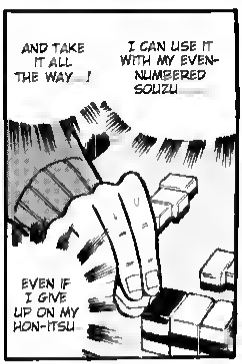

...THEREFORE THE LOWER WALL'S FLOW SHOULD BE ODDS
THE FLOW OF THE UPPER WALL IS EVENS
KEN AND I DRAW FROM THE UPPER PART OF THE WALL
IT'S ONLY NATURAL NOT ALL DRAWS CAN BE EVEN
THE GAME ISN'T BIASED TOWARDS ONE SUIT
I'M GETTING SOUZU BUT...
IN SHORT
THERE HASN'T BEEN A SOUZU YET
INCLUDING THE NEW DORA, ALL OF THE DORA SHOWING ARE MANZU
THE TILE SHIMOCHA DREW AND DISCARDED FROM THE RINSHAN DRAW WAS 8-PIN...!

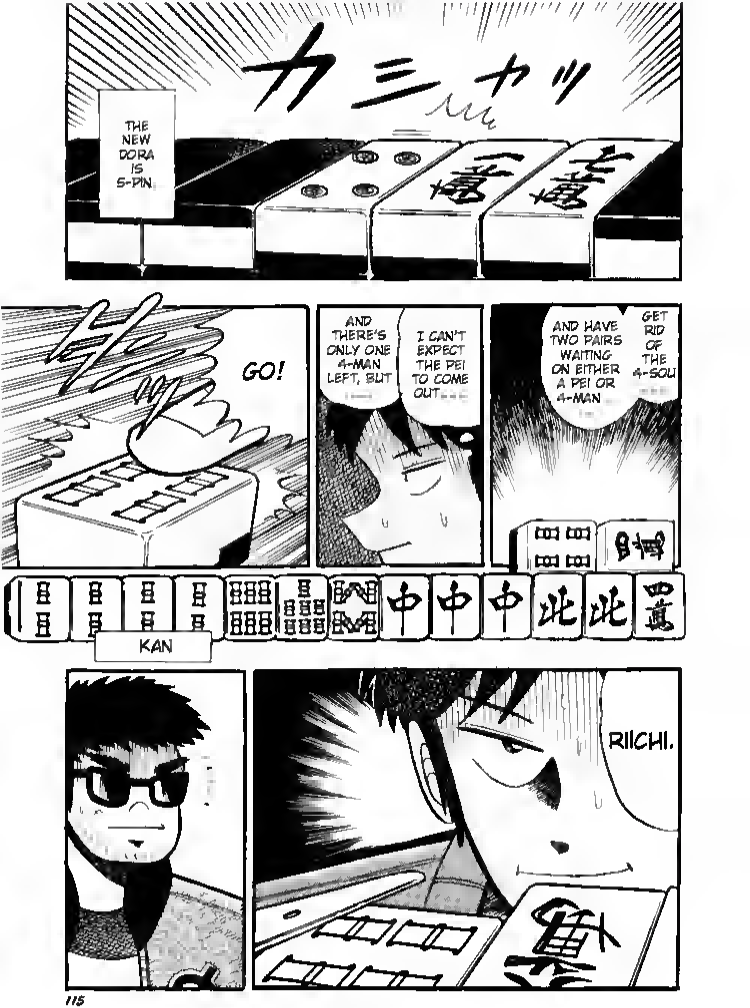
THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE IT'S AN ODD SOUZU.....
UNDERNEATH...! THAT URA-DORA THERE...

IF IT'S AN ODD SOUZU

KAN.

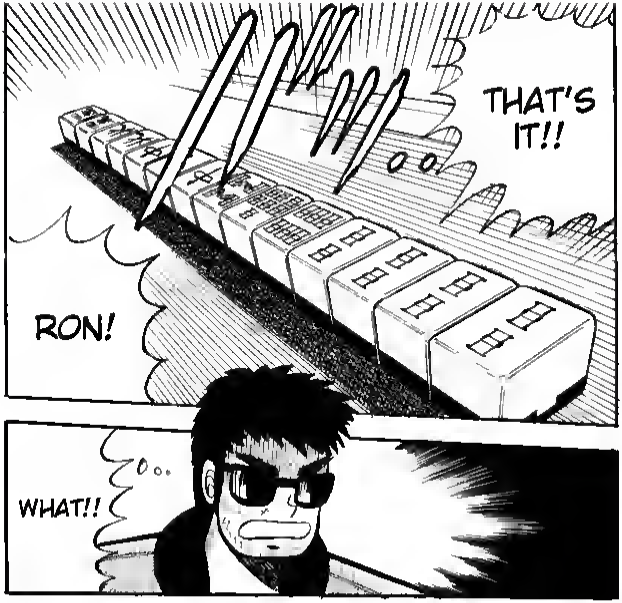
THERE'S A CHANCE AT VICTORY!

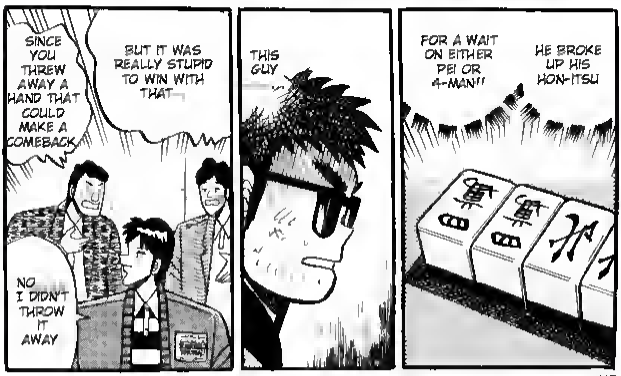

AND TAKE IT ALL THE WAY...!
I CAN USE IT WITH MY EVEN-NUMBERED SOUZU
EVEN IF I GIVE UP ON MY HON-ITSU

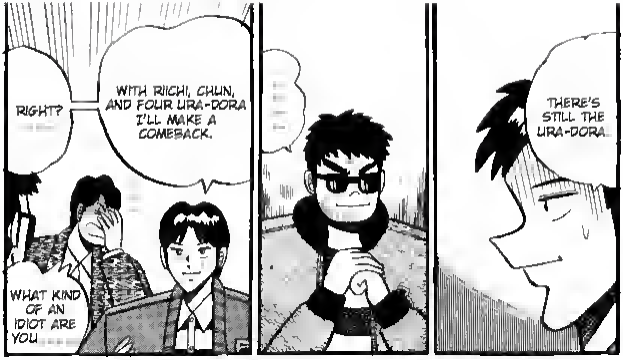

THE NEW DORA IS 5-PIN.
GO!
AND THERE'S ONLY ONE 4-MAN LEFT, BUT
I CAN'T EXPECT THE PEI TO COME OUT...
AND HAVE TWO PAIRS WAITING ON EITHER A PEI OR 4-MAN
GET RID OF THE 4-SOU
KAN
RIICHI.

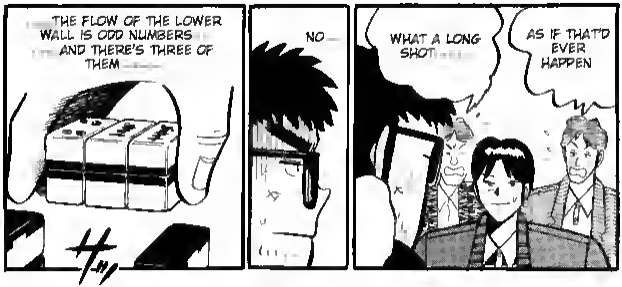
WHAT'S HE THINKING, BREAKING UP HIS HON-ITSU!?
WHAT, IS HE A MORON?
ザワ
ザワ
I'LL HAVE TO DRAW IT ON MY OWN
SINCE I GUESS NOBODY'S GONNA DEAL IN
ツモッ
HM...

I THOUGHTH HE'D TRY TO PLAY A LOT BETTER AROUND ME BUT...
THIS GUY FAINTLY SENSED THE FLOW OF EVEN NUMBERED TILES...
NEXT TURN
GUESS I OVER-ESTIMATED HIM

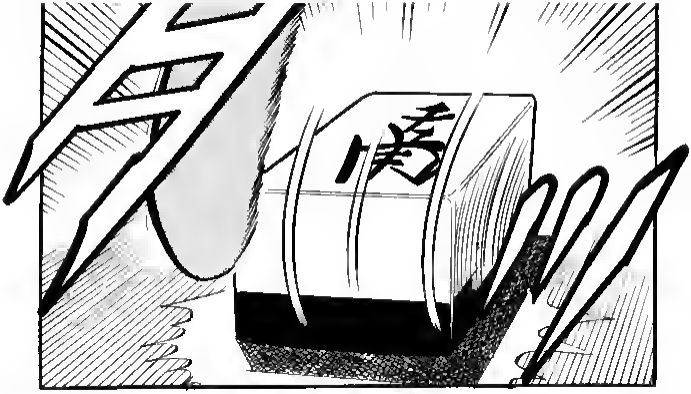

THAT'S IT!!
RON!
WHAT!!

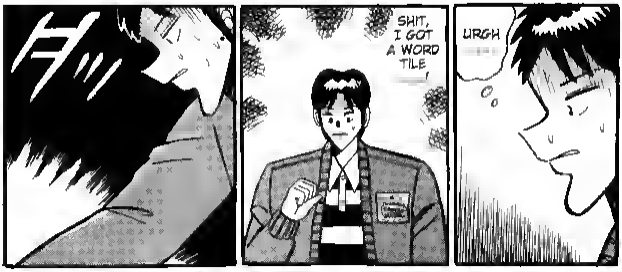

SINCE YOU THREW AWAY A HAND THAT COULD MAKE A COMEBACK
BUT IT WAS REALLY STUPID TO WIN WITH THAT
NO I DIDN'T THROW IT AWAY
THIS GUY
FOR A WAIT ON EITHER PEI OR 4-MAN!!
HE BROKE UP HIS HON-ITSU

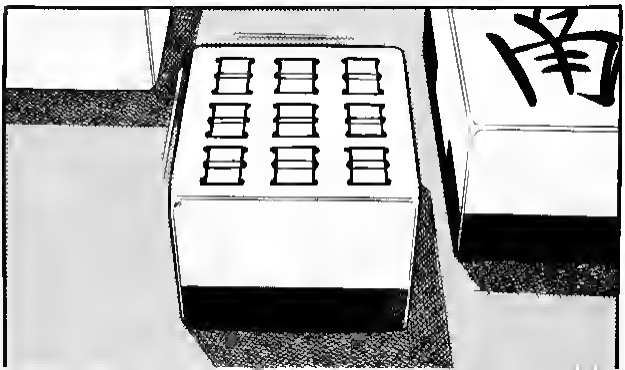

RIGHT?
WITH RIICHI, CHUN, AND FOUR URA-DORA I'LL MAKE A COMEBACK.
WHAT KIND OF AN IDIOT ARE YOU
THERE'S STILL THE URA-DORA.


THE FLOW OF THE LOWER WALL IS ODD NUMBERS AND THERE'S THREE OF THEM
NO
WHAT A LONG SHOT
AS IF THAT'D EVER HAPPEN

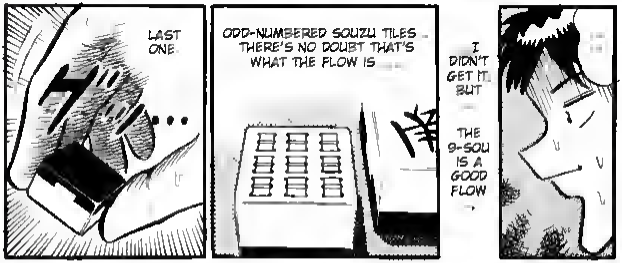
THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE HE'LL GET IT
QUESTION IS WILL HE GET FOUR OR NOT

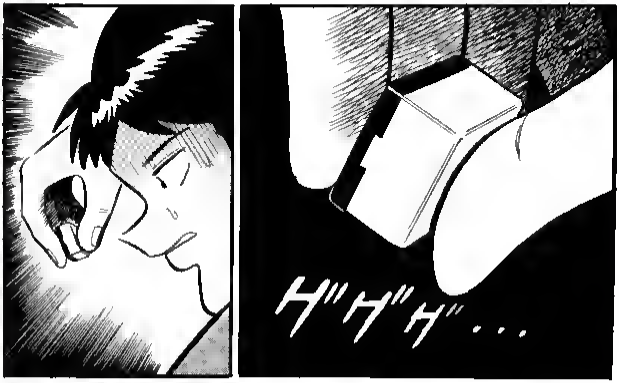


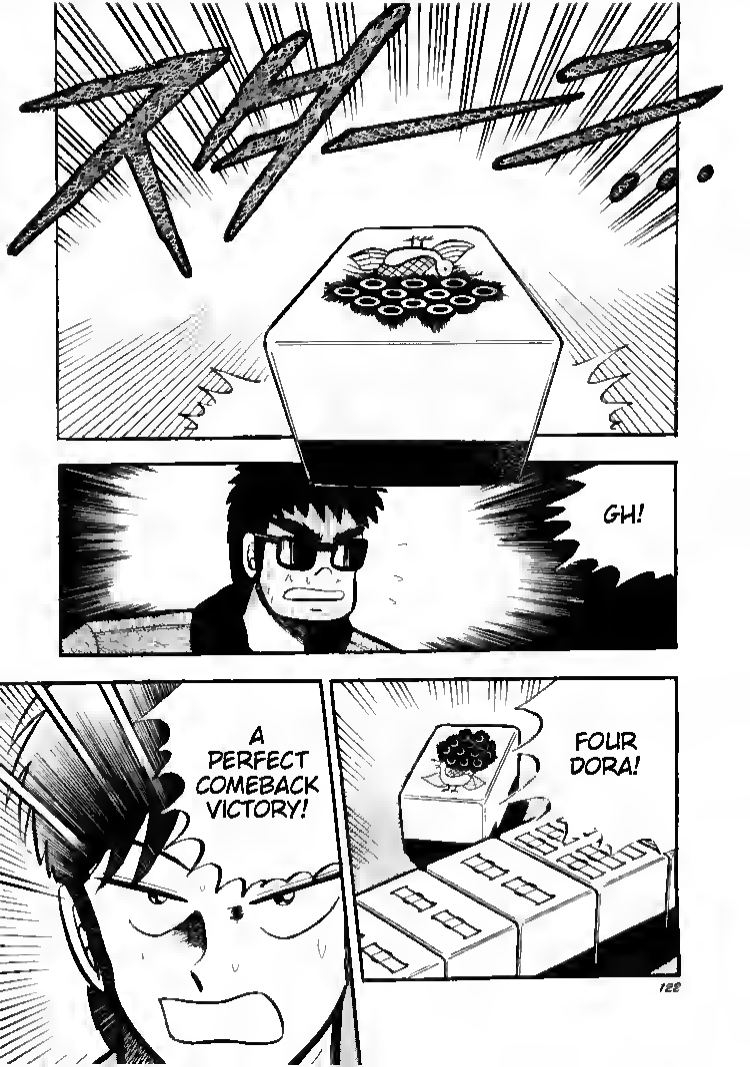

SHIT, I GOT A WORD TILE
URGH



THAT'S WHAT I WAS TELLING YOU...!
AS IF WISHFUL THINKING WOULD GET YOU THAT FAR
クス..
SEE LOOK
クス...
PFFT


LAST ONE
ﾊﾞﾝ...
ODD-NUMBERED SOUZU TILES THERE'S NO DOUBT THAT'S WHAT THE FLOW IS
I DIDN'T GET IT, BUT
THE 9-SOU IS A GOOD FLOW


ﾊﾞﾊﾞﾊﾞ...

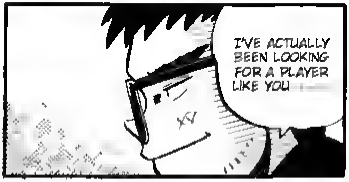

GH!
A PERFECT COMEBACK VICTORY!
FOUR DORA!

HEH HEH
WHAT DUMB LUCK
DIDN'T THINK HE COULD DO IT
WHAT THE HELL
THAT'S
I DIN'T THINK YOU'D BE ABLE TO TURN MY BIAS TOWARDS THE EVEN-NUMBERED TILES TO YOUR ADVANTAGE
IT WAS BASED ON YOUR PREDICTION
HEH HEH
NO
KEN, DO YOU THINK IT WAS LUCK, TOO...?

THERE'S A MAHJONG GENIUS I KNOW CALLED AKAGI.....
I JUST..... IMITATED HIM A LITTLE BIT.....
WHEN I DID IT, IT WAS LIKE I WENT ONE STEP DEEPER INTO MAHJONG.....
INTO THAT STATE OF MIND.....
IT MIGHT NOT LOOK PRETTY.....
BUT IT'S WELL WITHIN THE REALM OF AKAGI.

天
CHAPTER
26
REUNION OVER
DRINKS

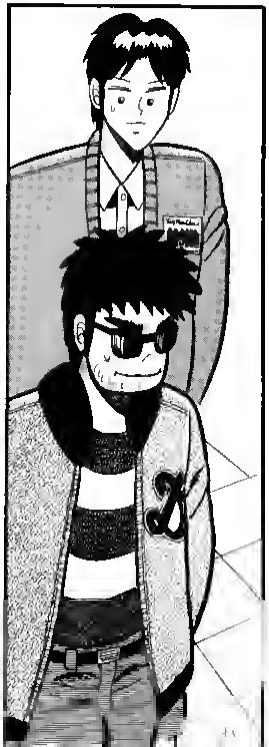
THE THIRD DAY AFTER I CAME TO OSAKA
I FINALLY MET A PLAYER WITH SOME SPIRIT. KEN
AFTER MAHJONG, HE CALLED ME OVER.


I'VE ACTUALLY BEEN LOOKING FOR A PLAYER LIKE YOU.

YOU'VE GOT TIME TODAY, RIGHT?
THERE'S SOMEONE I WANT YOU TO MEET.

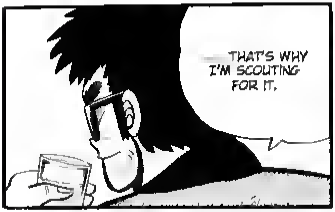
WELL, AFTER WE HAVE A DRINK OR TWO.

SOME-ONE YOU WANT ME TO MEET
—?
HEH HEH



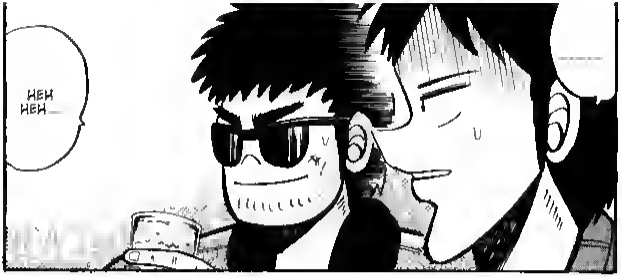
MEIJI MURA
明治村
酒屋
WHAT I HEARD FROM KEN THAT NIGHT
MADE ME DOUBT MY OWN EARS

YEAH...
EAST-WEST SHOWDOWN ...?


THAT'S WHY I'M SCOUTING FOR IT.

RIGHT NOW, BOTH CAMPS ARE TRYING TO LINE UP A FEW GUYS THAT CAN PLAY...
THEY'RE REALLY GOING ALL-OUT.

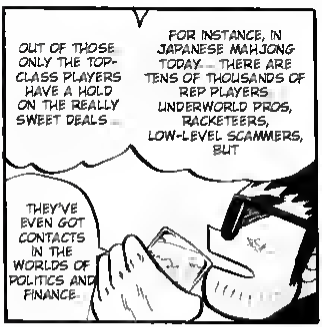
Hmm...


HEH HEH...

IN THE WORLD OF POSTWAR MAHJONG...
TOKYO HASN'T BEEN FAIR

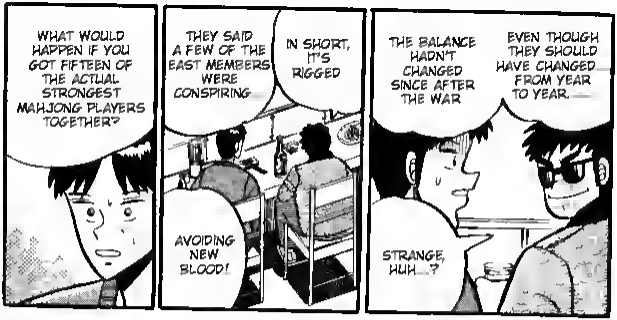
DISSATISFACTION WITH TOKYO.

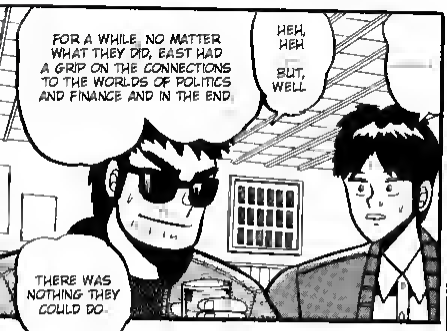
OF COURSE, EITHER JUST FOR SHOW OR OUT OF CURIOSITY, EVERYBODY'S STARTED DOING THAT KIND OF THING...
IT'S TIED TO A LOT OF PROFITABLE BUSINESS BUT...
AT ITS ROOT IS...


OUT OF THOSE ONLY THE TOP-CLASS PLAYERS HAVE A HOLD ON THE REALLY SWEET DEALS...
FOR INSTANCE, IN JAPANESE MAHJONG TODAY... THERE ARE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF REP PLAYERS... UNDERWORLD PROS, RACKETEERS, LOW-LEVEL SCAMMERS, BUT
THEY'VE EVEN GOT CONTACTS IN THE WORLDS OF POLITICS AND FINANCE...

AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT THE KANSAI AREA THINKS
OH, REALLY...

AND THE BALANCE OF THOSE PLAYERS, EAST AND WEST, WAS
TEN FOR EAST, FIVE FOR WEST
FIFTEEN OF THEM IN JAPAN


WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF YOU GOT FIFTEEN OF THE ACTUAL STRONGEST MAHJONG PLAYERS TOGETHER?
THEY SAID A FEW OF THE EAST MEMBERS WERE CONSPIRING...
IN SHORT, IT'S RIGGED
AVOIDING NEW BLOOD!
THE BALANCE HADN'T CHANGED SINCE AFTER THE WAR
EVEN THOUGH THEY SHOULD HAVE CHANGED FROM YEAR TO YEAR...
STRANGE, HUH...?

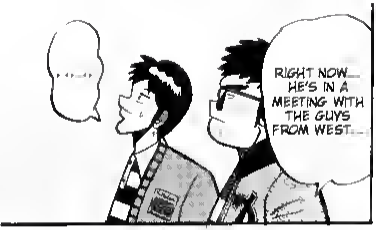

FOR A WHILE, NO MATTER WHAT THEY DID, EAST HAD A GRIP ON THE CONNECTIONS TO THE WORLDS OF POLITICS AND FINANCE AND IN THE END...
HEH, HEH
BUT, WELL
THERE WAS NOTHING THEY COULD DO.

THE TEN VS FIVE BALANCE WOULD TURN INTO THE OPPOSITE. WEST WOULD FAR SURPASS EAST

HARADA KATSUMI.
HE WAS THE FOREMOST LEADER OF KANSAI GANGS AND ALSO A REP PLAYER HIMSELF.
BUT A MONSTER APPEARED HERE...
THE SITUATION CHANGED.
HARADA HAS POWER AND INFLUENCE
IF HE WAS A NORMAL PUNK, HE'D HAVE BEEN HUSHED UP, BUT
HARADA FOUGHT IN THE EAST-WEST GAME AND THROUGH THAT, THREATENED TO REORGANIZE THE NUMBERS OF REP PLAYERS
HEH HEH
...AND SO THAT'S WHY YOU'RE SCOUTING FOR WEST!?
IN THE END, HIS OWN OPINIONS PASSED...
IT'S NOT JUST HIS OWN GANG, MOST OF THE WESTERN GANGS ARE GUARDING HIS BACK...
THERE WAS REORGANIZATION OF THE REP PLAYERS IN THE EAST-WEST SHOWDOWN

SO... FOR A LOW-RANKING GUY LIKE ME ENDS UP BETTING ON THE WINNER
WELL... THINK ABOUT IT. LIKE I SAID, THE CREW IS OVERWHELMINGLY DOMINATED BY WEST FOR THE MOST PART
THERE WON'T BE MUCH PROFIT LEFT FOR ME IF THEY WIN...
HUH?
I'M FOR EAST
BUT EAST... IS PRETTY LIGHTWEIGHT
I'LL PROBABLY GET SELECTED FIRST
FIRST OF ALL... THE MEMBERS OF WEST ARE JUST TOO GOOD... I CAN'T IMAGINE I'LL BE AMONG THEIR CHOSEN MEMBERS
GETTING SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN YOUR SIGHTS REALLY GETS A GUY EXCITED, EH?
HEY...
Y-YEAH
IT'S ONE HELL OF A LONG SHOT THOUGH...
HEH HEH...
MIGHT EVEN BE A TOP CLASS REP PLAYER
AND IF WE REALLY MANAGE TO WIN, THERE'S A LOT OF PROFIT TO BE HAD
THE KIND THAT MAKES BILLIONS A YEAR

THIS GUY... HE'S REALLY INTO IT
OH... THAT'S JUST TO REPRESENT THE FEELINGS OF THOSE OLD FARTS FROM WEST...
IT'S NOT HOW I REALLY FEEL...
JUST A LITTLE WHILE AGO, YOU WERE BADMOUTHING TOKYO...
NH?
BUT, YOU...
REALLY?!
AS YOU MIGHT GUESS, I'M A BIT INTERESTED...
カタ...!
GENERAL OF THE EAST...
SO... WELL, MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE EAST CAMP?!
THE GENERAL OF THE EAST IS MY BOSS...
RIGHT?
IF YOU ARE... THEN YOU'LL COME AND MEET MY BOSS...?

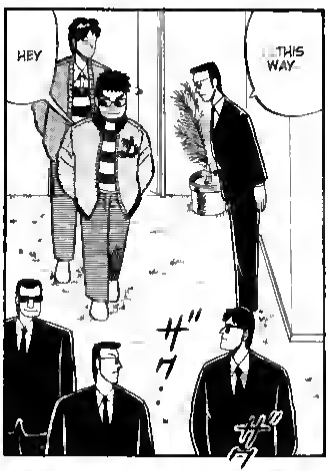

RIGHT NOW... HE'S IN A MEETING WITH THE GUYS FROM WEST...

THIS IS THE BUILDING

LET'S GO UP
SHOULD BE ALMOST DONE...
SURE...

NH?
LOOK.

HARADA
THAT... IS THE MONSTROUS REP PLAYER AND GANG LEADER I TALKED ABOUT BEFORE.

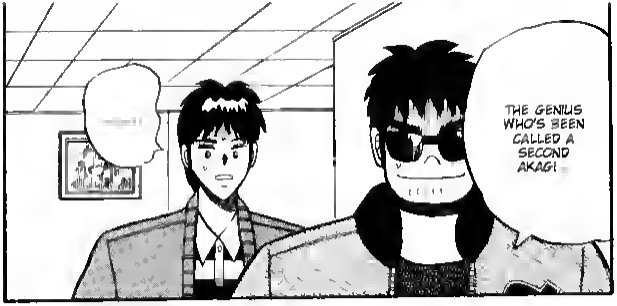

HEY
...THIS WAY...
ザッ・・・

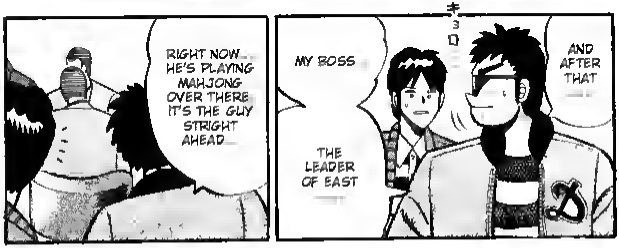
WITHOUT A DOUBT, THE STRONGEST INCUMBENT PLAYER.

EVEN AMONG THE TOP FIFTEEN PLAYERS IN JAPAN, HIS LIGHT SHONE AS HARSHLY AS THE SUN.

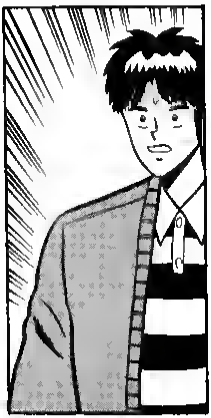
LEADER OF WEST:

# HARADA KATSUMI


THE GENIUS WHO'S BEEN CALLED A SECOND AKAGI


RIGHT NOW... HE'S PLAYING MAHJONG OVER THERE IT'S THE GUY STRIGHT AHEAD...
MY BOSS
THE LEADER OF EAST
AND AFTER THAT

WHAT THE...?


HUH ...?

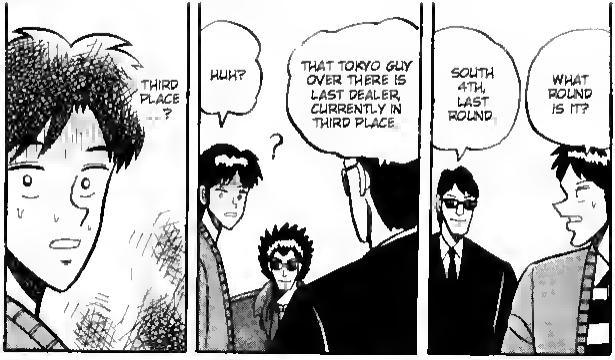
A HONEST STRENGTH THAT MAKES THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE.

THE MAN... WHO MADE THE UNDEFEATED AKAGI TOUCH DOWN TO EARTH ONCE.

LEADER OF EAST:

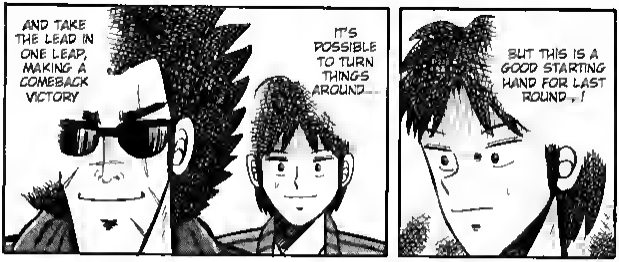
# TEN TAKASHI

TEN
OF COURSE HE'D REMEMBER ME
IT HAD BEEN TWO YEARS SINCE I SAW HIM. TEN
IT FELT LIKE HE GAVE ME A SIGNAL FROM BEHIND HIS SUNGLASSES
TEN IS THE HEAD OF EAST
AND THAT IN THIS EAST-WEST BATTLE
BUT DESPITE THAT, IN THOSE TWO YEARS I COULDN'T BELIEVE HE'D RISEN TO THE TOP RANKS IN THE UNDERWORLD


THIRD PLACE...?
HUH?
THAT TOKYO GUY OVER THERE IS LAST DEALER, CURRENTLY IN THIRD PLACE.
SOUTH 4TH, LAST ROUND.
WHAT ROUND IS IT?

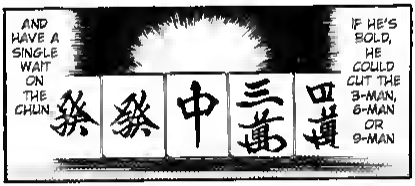
HAS HE GOTTEN THAT BADLY OUT OF PRACTICE?
I WOULDN'T THINK THE PLAYERS AROUND HIM ARE THAT TOUGH BUT

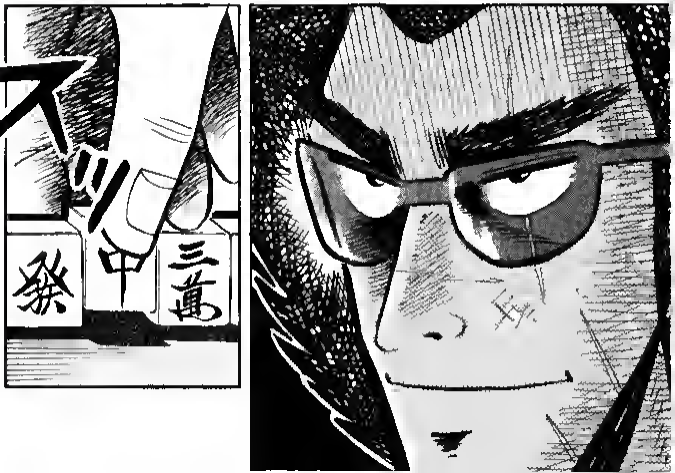
LAST ROUND. TEN'S STARTING HAND


AND TAKE THE LEAD IN ONE LEAP, MAKING A COMEBACK VICTORY
IT'S POSSIBLE TO TURN THINGS AROUND...
BUT THIS IS A GOOD STARTING HAND FOR LAST ROUND...!

# テンパイ

TEN'S TENPAI IN THE 12TH TURN




スッ
發
中
三萬

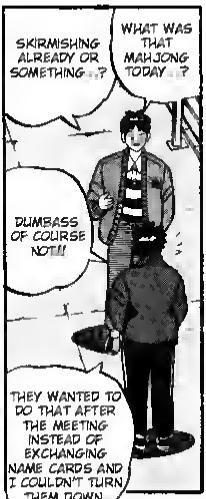
HE DEALT THE CHUN...?
BUT THAT CHUN IS...
RON.
BUT WHY DID TEN DISCARD THE CHUN...
YEAH, IT WAS.
WELL.
THAT'S IT FOR TODAY...

HIRO
...IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME HUH...
HUH?
YEAH

YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE DOING REALLY GOOD
YEAH
HEH HEH
WELL A BIT
WHAT, YOU TWO KNOW EACH OTHER?

OH REALLY
I HEARD ABOUT MOST OF WHAT'S GOING ON FROM KEN

OF COURSE...
SURE

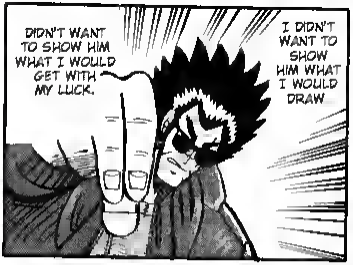

SKIRMISHING ALREADY OR SOMETHING...?
WHAT WAS THAT MAHJONG TODAY...?
DUMBASS OF COURSE NOT!!
THEY WANTED TO DO THAT AFTER THE MEETING INSTEAD OF EXCHANGING NAME CARDS AND I COULDN'T TURN THEM DOWN

IF YOU WEREN'T, THERE'S NO WAY YOU WOULD HAVE PLAYED THAT CHUN.

HUH?
SO I GUESS YOU'RE SAYING YOU LOST ON PURPOSE TODAY, TEN.

BECAUSE I WAS SURE I WOULD HAVE DRAWN THAT CHUN FOR SHOU-SAN-GEN IN ANOTHER TWO OR THREE TURNS...
I WANTED TO FINISH QUIETLY BUT...
IT JUST WASN'T GOING TO HAPPEN.
REALLY, DON'T READ TOO MUCH INTO IT.
OH WELL.
發 發 發 三萬 四萬 五萬 六萬 七萬 八萬 九萬
—AND THEN TEN FLAT-OUT SAID SOMETHING AMAZING
IF I'D DRAWN IT, I'D HAVE TO WIN. I DIDN'T WANT TO SHOW HOW I RIDE THE FLOW TO HARADA.
THAT'S WHY I DISCARDED THE CHUN.
HUH?

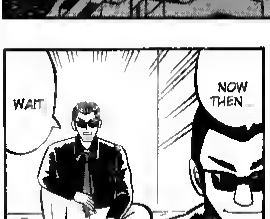
I DON'T WANT TO SHOW HIM WHAT'S IN MY HAND...
UNTIL THEN
I MIGHT HAVE TO PLAY AGAINST THAT MAN A LOT BUT...


DIDN'T WANT TO SHOW HIM WHAT I WOULD GET WITH MY LUCK.
I DIDN'T WANT TO SHOW HIM WHAT I WOULD DRAW

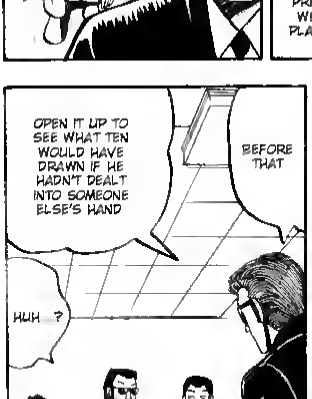
MY LUCK...
NOT JUST MY SKILL, BUT ALSO

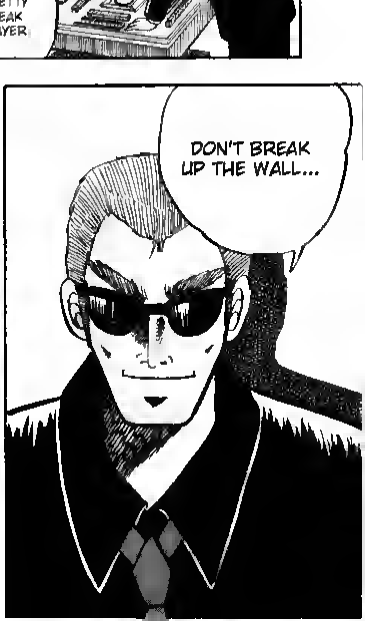
I DIDN'T WANT HIM TO SEE MY FLOW...

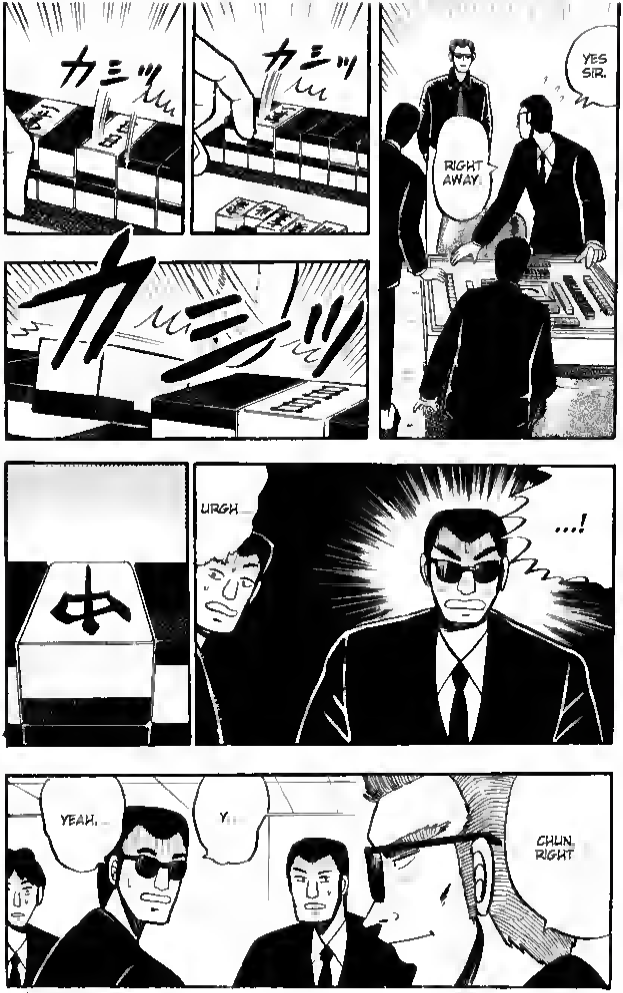
WHAT, YOU'RE KIDDING

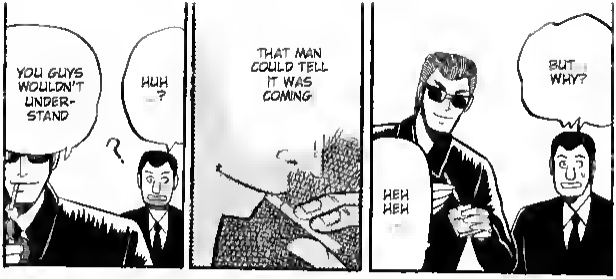

WAIT
NOW THEN

YEAH, HE BROKE UP A SHOU-SAN-GEN
HE'S EAST'S NUMBER-ONE PLAYER?
HE'S A PRETTY WEAK PLAYER.

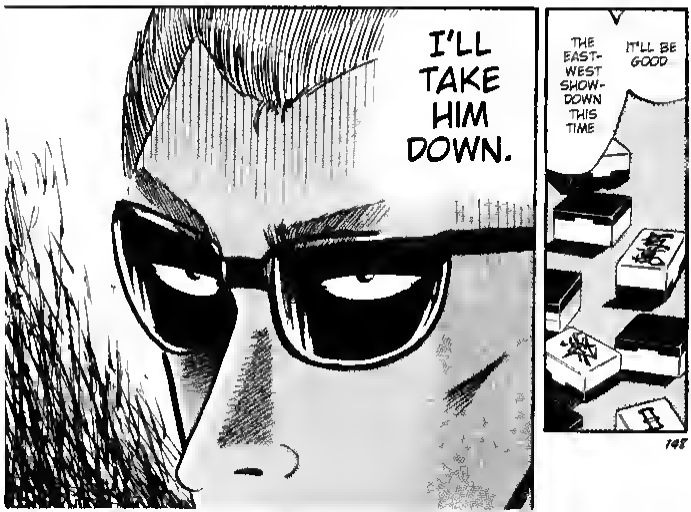

OPEN IT UP TO SEE WHAT TEN WOULD HAVE DRAWN IF HE HADN'T DEALT INTO SOMEONE ELSE'S HAND
BEFORE THAT
HUH...?


DON'T BREAK UP THE WALL...

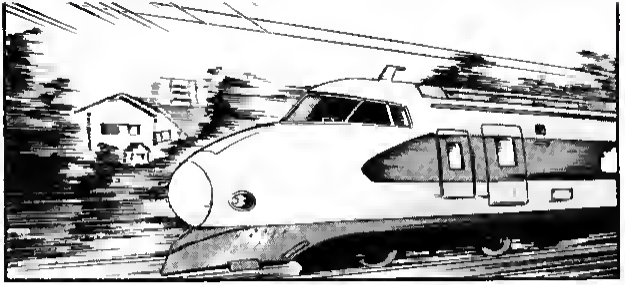

カミッ
カミッ
カミッ!!
YES SIR.
RIGHT AWAY.
URGH...
...!
YEAH...
Y...
CHUN, RIGHT

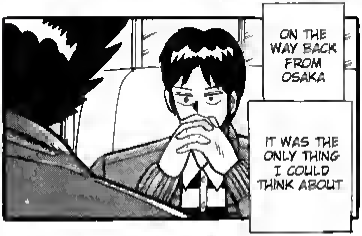

YOU GUYS WOULDN'T UNDER-STAND
HUH...?
THAT MAN COULD TELL IT WAS COMING
HEH HEH
BUT WHY?

THAT'S NOT THE CASE AT ALL.
YOU MIGHT THINK THE EAST PLAYERS ARE GARBAGE, ALL TALK AND NO ACTION, BUT
IN SHORT
OH WELL... IT WOULDN'T BE ANY FUN IF NONE OF THEIR PLAYERS HAD SOME SPIRIT.

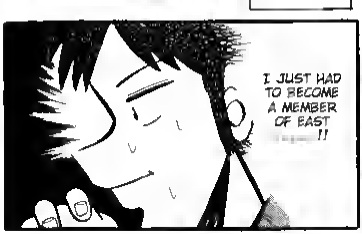

I'LL TAKE HIM DOWN.
THE EAST-WEST SHOW-DOWN THIS TIME
IT'LL BE GOOD

天
CHAPTER
27
EAST-WEST
SHOWDOWN




ON THE WAY BACK FROM OSAKA
IT WAS THE ONLY THING I COULD THINK ABOUT

EAST-WEST SHOW-DOWN

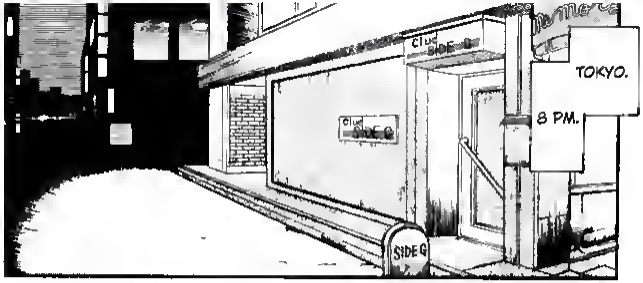

I JUST HAD TO BECOME A MEMBER OF EAST!!

BUT WASN'T KEN GOING ON AND ON ABOUT IT——

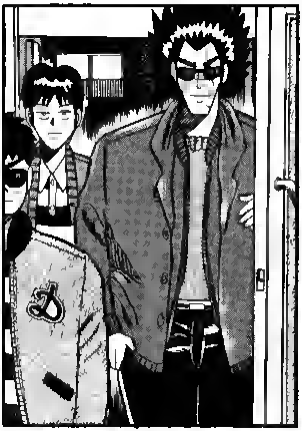
HE HASN'T BROUGHT UP THE QUESTION OF MY MEMBERSHIP SINCE MEETING HIM LAST NIGHT. GOOD PROOF I BETTER NOT BRING IT UP——

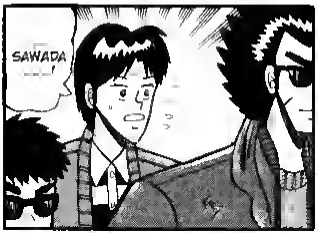
100% AGAINST IT——
BUT——, TEN WAS THE HEAD OF EAST AND THE PERSON WHO LEAST WANTS ME INVOLVED IN THAT KIND OF THING——

ALL IN ONE PLACE.
THE GREATEST MAHJONG HUSTLERS OF EACH REGION, FROM ALL OVER JAPAN
I HAVE TO TALK TEN INTO IT SOMEHOW.
IN FACT, A BATTLE TO DETERMINE THE BEST IN JAPAN .....!
IT ISN'T GOING TO BE EASY TO MAKE HIM GIVE IN


TOKYO.
8 PM.
SIDE G

...HEY...



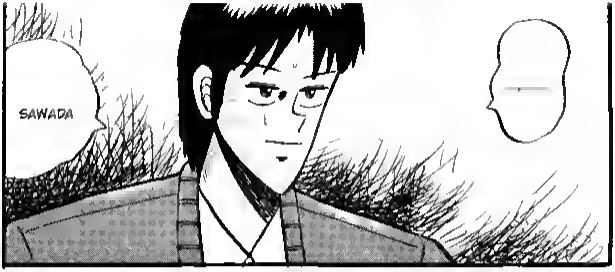

SAWADA
---!

I'M PARTICIPATING AS PART OF THE EAST SIDE IN THE EAST-WEST BATTLE THIS TIME
IT'S NOT THAT SURPRISING

HEH HEH
WHY ?

SO HOW'RE WE DOING ?
OUR SIDE, TOKYO ?
WELL OBLITERATED
IT'S PRETTY MUCH TOTALLY
ONE AFTER ANOTHER, THE MAJOR REP PLAYERS HAVE BEEN BOUGHT OUT. THEY'RE IN HIDING !
HE DOESN'T MESS AROUND
THAT YAKUZA, HARADA, IS GOING TO TAKE THIS MATCH, 100% !

EAST CAN'T EVEN GET ENOUGH PLAYERS TO STAND UP AGAINST HIM.
WELL, BUT IT'S NOT WORTH THINKING ABOUT.
AND KNOWING WE'LL LOSE, NOBODY WILL GATHER UNDER OUR FLAG.
TO PUT IT MORE STRONGLY. IT'S PASSIVE BETRAYAL.
IT DOESN'T CONCERN THEM.
THROUGH THAT ALONE HARADA'S BEEN BUYING THEM OUT.
IT'S A GOOD DEAL FOR THOSE FOOLS.
EVERYONE'S BEEN TAKEN BY WEST?
NO, IT'S NOT THAT.
IN THE END -- TEN AND I ARE THE ONLY ONES ON THIS SIDE.


SAWADA
...

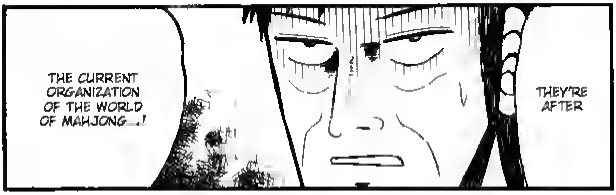
I KNOW WHAT YOU CAME HERE TO TALK ABOUT, HIROYUKI.
DON'T SAY IT.
THEN...
...?

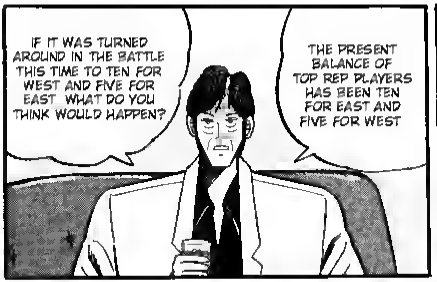
YOU CAN'T BE A MEMBER OF EAST.....
AS WE SAID, THE EAST SIDE IN STRUGGLING TO FIND PLAYERS BUT...
NO... I'M AFRAID THERE'S BEEN A MISUNDER-STANDING.
DESPITE THAT

ON THE SURFACE
SAWADA
A FIGHT THAT UNDERWORLD PROS STAKE THEIR PRIDE ON AND BOAST ABOUT, BUT
THE REALITY IS DIFFERENT
THIS BATTLE IS ABOUT REORGANI-ZATION OF REP PLAYERS
THE REALITY IS... IT'S CLOSE TO BEING A WAR BETWEEN YAKUZA REPRESEN-TATIVES.
THERE'S BEEN A NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE BALANCE OF EAST AND WEST REP PLAYERS.
カタ

THAT WOULD GET UPSET OVER THAT KIND OF THING...
ガコ
THERE AREN'T ANY GUYS
BUT, SEE
THEY HELD THAT THE BALANCE DIDN'T CORRESPOND TO ABILITY
SO THEN WHY DID THEY UNITE ON A SCALE LIKE THIS?
TO GET TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER
YAKUZA MAHJONG PROS AS A WHOLE ARE BASICALLY AMAZINGLY LAZY CREATURES
FOR THE SAKE OF SOME-THING BEING FAIR.
AFTER ALL, SINCE THEY DON'T ACT LIKE YOUR AVERAGE JOE THEY'D NEVER PROTEST
THEY'RE DROPPING OUT FOR A HUGE AMOUNT OF MONEY.

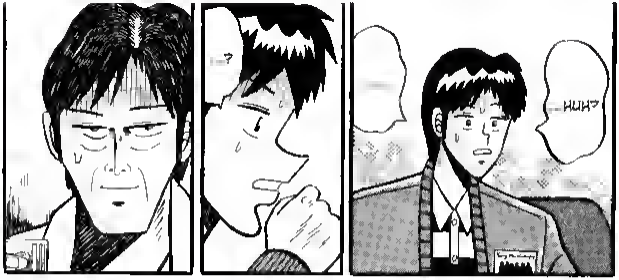
ISN'T TO IMPROVE THE STATUS OF REP PLAYERS OR HAVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITY OR WHATEVER.
IN OTHER WORDS THEIR GOAL
NOTHING SMALL LIKE THAT
....

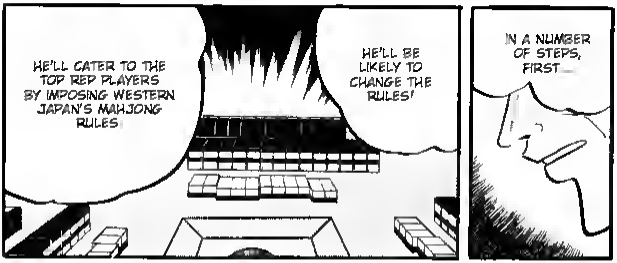

THE CURRENT ORGANIZATION OF THE WORLD OF MAHJONG...!
THEY'RE AFTER

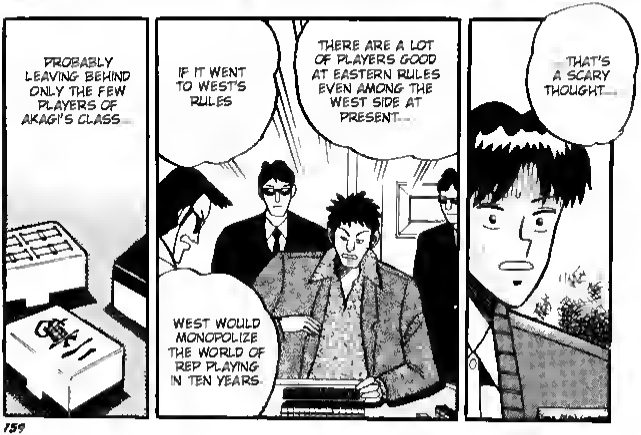

IF IT WAS TURNED AROUND IN THE BATTLE THIS TIME TO TEN FOR WEST AND FIVE FOR EAST WHAT DO YOU THINK WOULD HAPPEN?
THE PRESENT BALANCE OF TOP REP PLAYERS HAS BEEN TEN FOR EAST AND FIVE FOR WEST

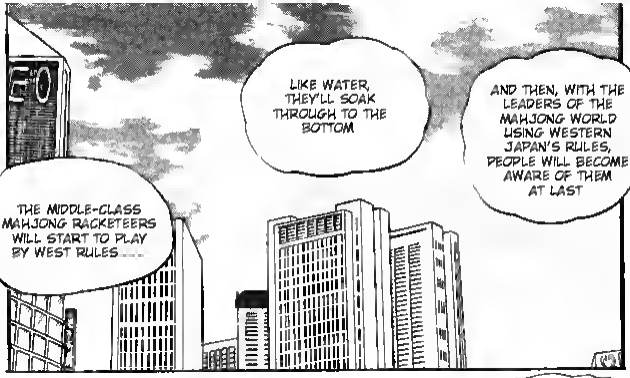
ORGANIZATION ...?
YEAH...

HIROYUKI, WHAT DO YOU THINK?
HARADA'S FIRST JOB AS THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSING SIDE?


...?
...HUH?

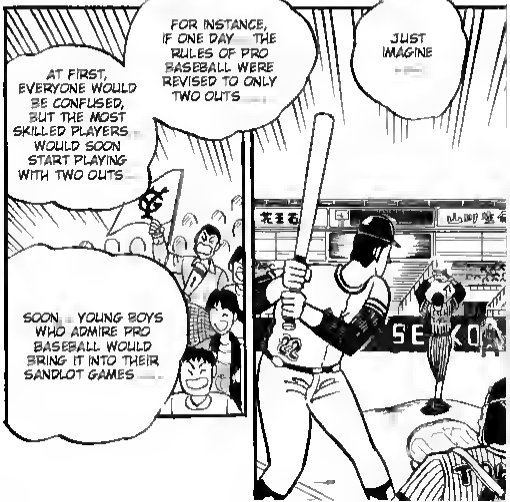

HE'LL CATER TO THE TOP REP PLAYERS BY IMPOSING WESTERN JAPAN'S MAHJONG RULES.
HE'LL BE LIKELY TO CHANGE THE RULES!
IN A NUMBER OF STEPS, FIRST...


PROBABLY LEAVING BEHIND ONLY THE FEW PLAYERS OF AKAGI'S CLASS...
IF IT WENT TO WEST'S RULES
THERE ARE A LOT OF PLAYERS GOOD AT EASTERN RULES EVEN AMONG THE WEST SIDE AT PRESENT...
WEST WOULD MONOPOLIZE THE WORLD OF REP PLAYING IN TEN YEARS.
...THAT'S A SCARY THOUGHT...


LIKE WATER, THEY'LL SOAK THROUGH TO THE BOTTOM
AND THEN, WITH THE LEADERS OF THE MAHJONG WORLD USING WESTERN JAPAN'S RULES, PEOPLE WILL BECOME AWARE OF THEM AT LAST
THE MIDDLE-CLASS MAHJONG RACKETEERS WILL START TO PLAY BY WEST RULES.....

THE NUMBER OF PLAYERS IN THE CITIES' MAHJONG PARLORS PLAYING BY WEST RULES WILL INCREASE

WITH THE TWO OUTS RULE, IT JUST WOULDN'T FEEL LIKE BASEBALL ANYMORE.....


AT FIRST, EVERYONE WOULD BE CONFUSED, BUT THE MOST SKILLED PLAYERS WOULD SOON START PLAYING WITH TWO OUTS.....
FOR INSTANCE, IF ONE DAY THE RULES OF PRO BASEBALL WERE REVISED TO ONLY TWO OUTS.....
JUST IMAGINE.....
SOON... YOUNG BOYS WHO ADMIRE PRO BASEBALL WOULD BRING IT INTO THEIR SANDLOT GAMES.....
SEIKO

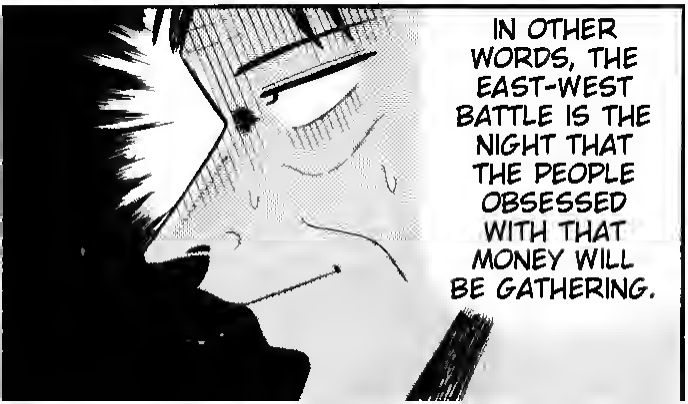
.....
THEY FOLLOW THE STRONG.
PEOPLE... LIKE THE STRONG .....
USING THEIR UNDERWORLD CONNECTIONS THEY'LL WIN OVER THE MASS MEDIA WITH PRESSURE FROM THE WORLDS OF POLITICS AND FINANCE.....
THEN, IF WESTERN JAPAN'S RULES GET THAT FAR, AT AN OPPORTUNE MOMENT
THE LEGIT PRO'S RULES WILL CHANGE TO WESTERN JAPAN'S RULES TOO.....
ONE DAY
IN THIS GREAT BATTLE BETWEEN EAST AND WEST EAST'S STRONGHOLD OF ITS SUPERIOR POSITION WILL BE SHATTERED AND AFTER A NUMBER OF YEARS.....
麻雀
KAMADA
TEL 03
HARADA'S AMBITION WILL FINALLY BE REALIZED
AND THEN...

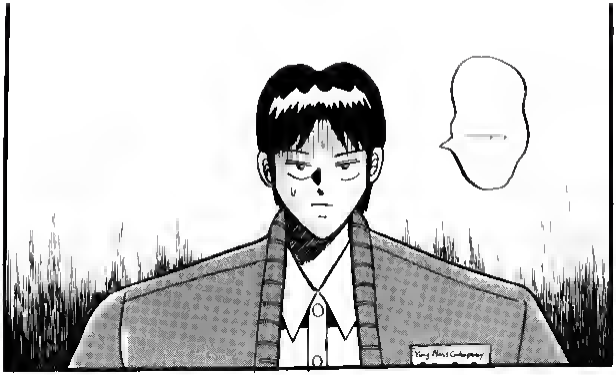
ONE DAY, OF, ONE MONTH, ONE YEAR... ON THAT DAY, ALL OF THE MAHJONG PARLORS IN THE COUNTRY OF JAPAN
麻雀 ABEL
JOKER
2F 麻雀
WILL BE USING WESTERN JAPAN'S RULES.

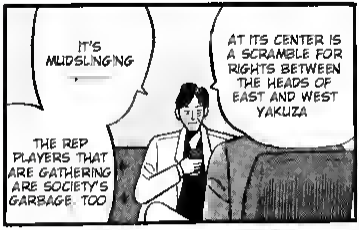
ARE, NATURALLY, PLAYERS OF WESTERN JAPANESE RULES
AND THE ONES WHO WILL BE PRESIDING OVER EACH OF THOSE INDIVIDUAL MAHJONG PARLORS

TO ALL THE MAHJONG PARLORS THAT COULD BE UNDER THEIR PATRONAGE...
IN OTHER WORDS, A LARGE NUMBER OF THE PEOPLE UNDER HARADA'S COMMAND ARE ADVANCING TO THE EAST

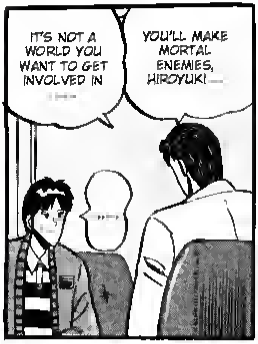
IN ONE MONTH, THAT'S 300 MILLION
IF THEY LEVIED A FEE ON EACH OF 10,000 YEN A DAY
ON EACH ONE OF THOSE
THEY SAY THERE'S SOME 30,000 MAHJONG PARLORS IN JAPAN
麻雀
IN A YEAR .....
ONE HUNDRED BILLION.

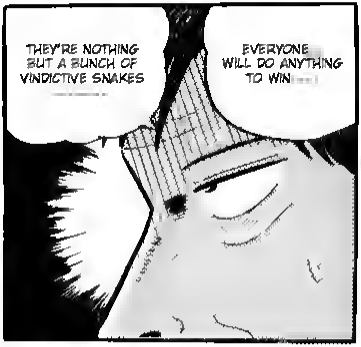

IN OTHER WORDS, THE EAST-WEST BATTLE IS THE NIGHT THAT THE PEOPLE OBSESSED WITH THAT MONEY WILL BE GATHERING.




IT'S MUDSLINGING
AT ITS CENTER IS A SCRAMBLE FOR RIGHTS BETWEEN THE HEADS OF EAST AND WEST YAKUZA
THE REP PLAYERS THAT ARE GATHERING ARE SOCIETY'S GARBAGE, TOO

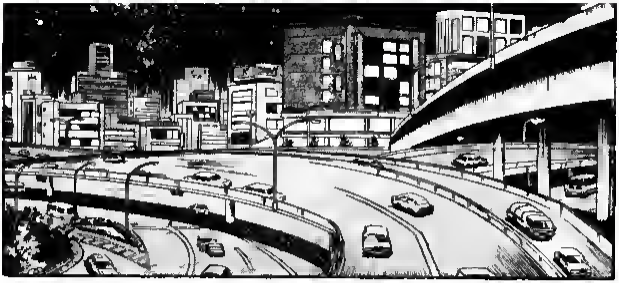
IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S A BATTLE TO DETERMINE THE BEST
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT IT


IT'S NOT A WORLD YOU WANT TO GET INVOLVED IN
YOU'LL MAKE MORTAL ENEMIES, HIROYUKI

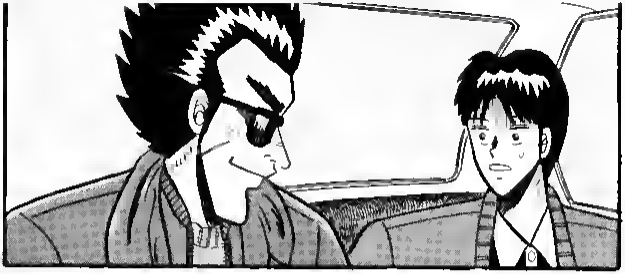

THEY'RE NOTHING BUT A BUNCH OF VINDICTIVE SNAKES
EVERYONE WILL DO ANYTHING TO WIN

PLEASE LET ME IN!
PLEASE!
SAWADA
EVEN SO
IF THEY KNEW YOU WERE GOING TO BE ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF EAST
GOOD GRIEF! YOU JUST DON'T GET IT, DO YOU
THE GUYS FROM WEST WOULD BE AFTER YOUR LIFE!!

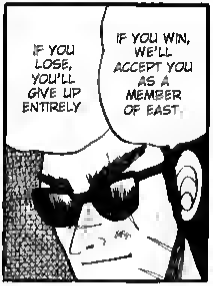
SAWADA.
.....
EVEN SO, PLEASE.
I HAVE AN IDEA.
COME ALONG WITH ME FOR A BIT.
IT'D BE HOPELESS FROM THE BEGINNING EVEN IF WE TALKED TO HIROYUKI.
AFTER ALL, I FIGURED...
JUST LEAVE THIS TO ME
?
YOU TOO...
HIRO...
WOO...
GOOD GRIEF...
SAWADA...
SIGH



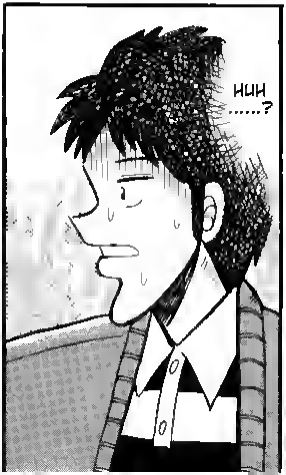
A GAMBLE...
IDEA YOU SAID...?
I THOUGHT WE'D SETTLE IT IN BLACK AND WHITE BETWEEN YOU AND ME, HIRO
SINCE WE WON'T MAKE ANY HEADWAY BY TALKING



DON'T WORRY, IT'S MOSTLY TO TEST YOUR LUCK.....
BUT AGAINST YOU.....


IF YOU LOSE, YOU'LL GIVE UP ENTIRELY
IF YOU WIN, WE'LL ACCEPT YOU AS A MEMBER OF EAST.

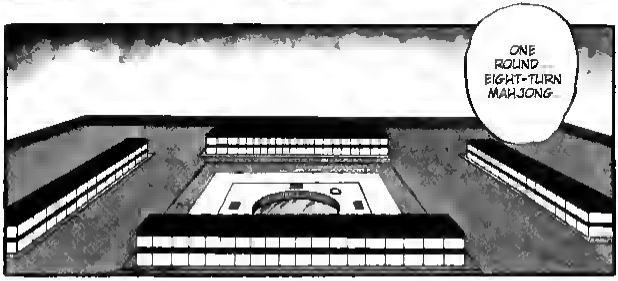
YEAH.
AM I GOING TO BE PLAYING AGAINST YOU, TEN.....?


HUH.....?

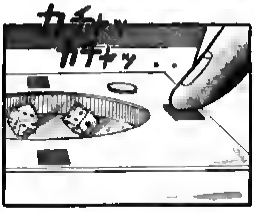
OF A MAHJONG GAME THAT'S OVER IN 8 TURNS.....
JUST ONE ROUND.

I HAD THIS ONE RESERVED FOR TONIGHT
LET'S GO...
ONE ROUND, EIGHT TURN MAHJONG?

麻雀


ONE ROUND EIGHT-TURN MAHJONG

IT'S SIMPLE.....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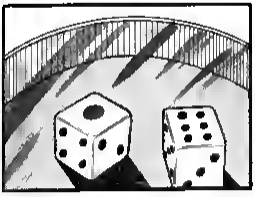
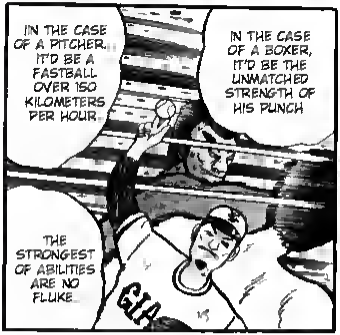
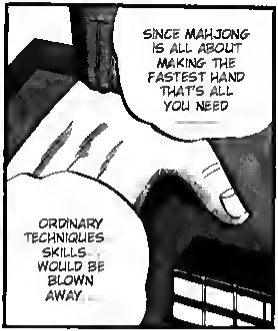
カチャッ..

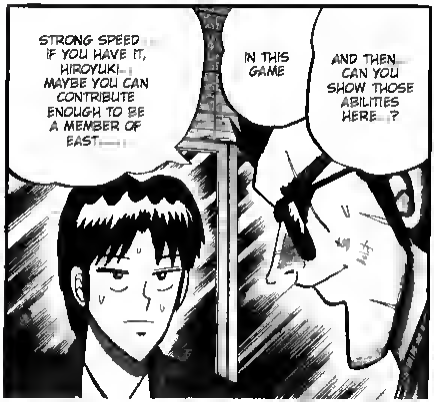


CHAPTER 28
8-TURN GAME
IF YOU WIN, HIROYUKI... WE'LL ACCEPT YOU AS A MEMBER OF EAST.
THIS ROUND, WITHIN EIGHT TURNS
ANYTHING WILL DO. EITHER WAY...
CHEAP HAND OR HIGH-SCORING HAND, IT DOESN'T MATTER.....
IF YOU'RE SERIOUS ABOUT TRYING TO WIN
THIS IS PRETTY MUCH YOUR ONLY OPPORTUNITY
IF YOU'RE UP AGAINST PROS THAT FAR EXCEED YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE AND ACHIEVMENTS HIROYUKI,
BUT
IN SHORT, IT'S ALL ABOUT YOUR SPEED .....!!
THIS IS A LOSING BET FOR YOU, HIROYUKI.
NEEDLESS TO SAY
YOUR CHANCES ARE PRETTY BAD...

.....


IN THE CASE OF A PITCHER, IT'D BE A FASTBALL OVER 150 KILOMETERS PER HOUR...
IN THE CASE OF A BOXER, IT'D BE THE UNMATCHED STRENGTH OF HIS PUNCH
THE STRONGEST OF ABILITIES ARE NO FLUKE...


SINCE MAHJONG IS ALL ABOUT MAKING THE FASTEST HAND THAT'S ALL YOU NEED
ORDINARY TECHNIQUES SKILLS... WOULD BE BLOWN AWAY...

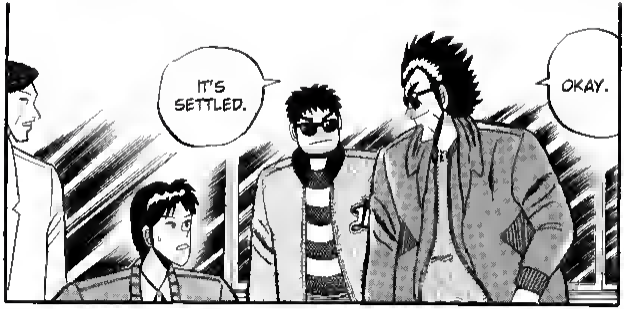

STRONG SPEED... IF YOU HAVE IT, HIROYUKI... MAYBE YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE ENOUGH TO BE A MEMBER OF EAST...
IN THIS GAME
AND THEN... CAN YOU SHOW THOSE ABILITIES HERE...?

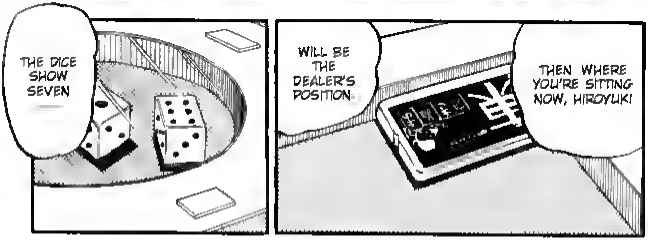
DO YOU HAVE THOSE, HIROYUKI...?

DESPITE SAYING THAT
IT'S TRUE THAT GIVING YOU A CRAP HAND TO START JUST WOULDN'T DO
HEH HEH
YOU'RE ONLY GOING TO BE A BURDEN
OR TO PUT IT ANOTHER WAY, IF YOU CAN'T
JUST HAVE A LOOK AT ALL OF THEM FIRST
OUT OF THE FOUR SETS OF STARTING HANDS
THAT'S WHY I'LL GIVE YOU ONLY ONE ADVANTAGE
IT'S GOING TO BE CLOSE!
THEN, USING THE FASTEST HAND WIN WITHIN EIGHT TURNS
DURING THAT TIME... WE'LL BE OUT OF THE ROOM.
AND PICK THE FASTEST ONE OF THEM!
YOU'LL HAVE TWO MINUTES TO CHOOSE

I CAN'T GIVE YOU A BETTER START THAN THIS.
IT'S YOUR TICKET TO BEING AN EAST REPRESENTATIVE.

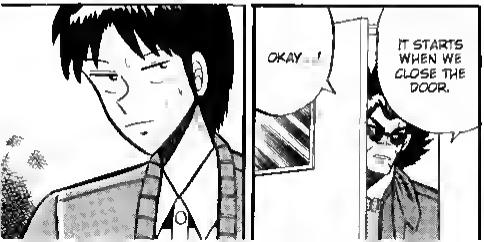
I ACCEPT YOUR ONE ROUND, EIGHT TURN GAME.
UNDERSTOOD


IT'S SETTLED.
OKAY.

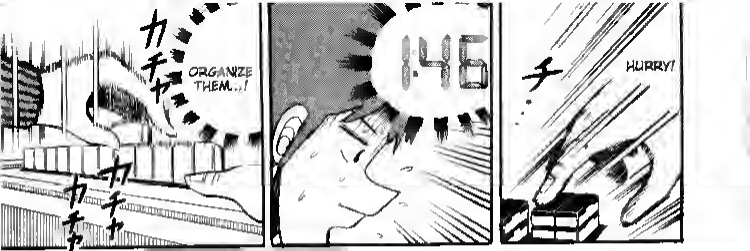

THE DICE SHOW SEVEN
WILL BE THE DEALER'S POSITION
THEN WHERE YOU'RE SITTING NOW, HIROYUKI

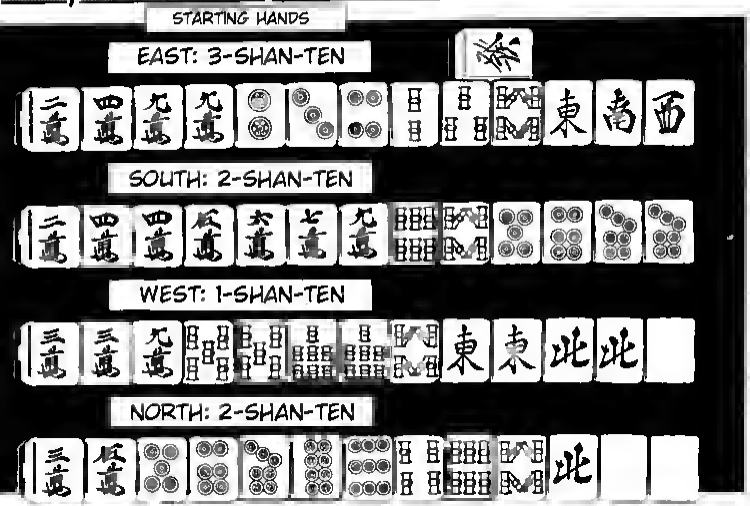
THERE'S NO TIME TO WASTE
EVEN WITH TWO MINUTES SETTING UP AND ORGANIZING THE STARTING HANDS WILL EAT UP MOST OF YOUR TIME.

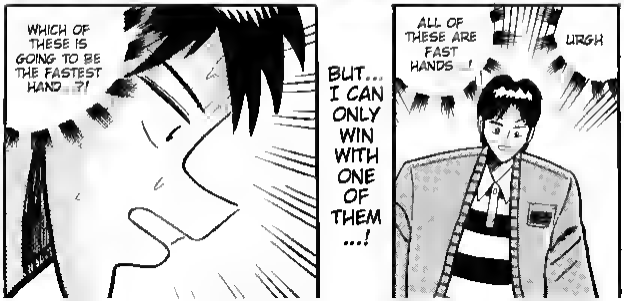
WE'LL GIVE YOU EXACTLY TWO MINUTES AND THEN COME BACK IN
YOU JUST HAVE TO PICK THE FASTEST STARTING HAND IN THAT TIME, HIRO

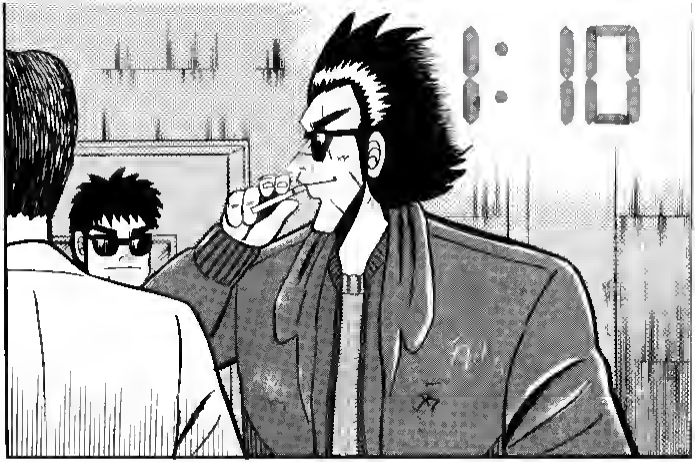

OKAY...!
IT STARTS WHEN WE CLOSE THE DOOR.

TIME LIMIT
2:00
ハァ…
チャ
チャ
FIRST... THE STARTING HANDS ...!

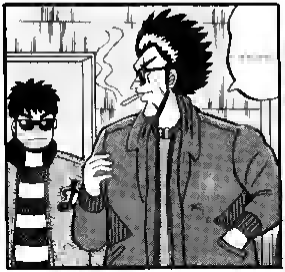

カチャ
ORGANIZE THEM...!
146
チ
HURRY!


STARTING HANDS
EAST: 3-SHAN-TEN
SOUTH: 2-SHAN-TEN
WEST: 1-SHAN-TEN
NORTH: 2-SHAN-TEN


WHICH OF THESE IS GOING TO BE THE FASTEST HAND...?!
BUT... I CAN ONLY WIN WITH ONE OF THEM ...!
ALL OF THESE ARE FAST HANDS...!
URGH

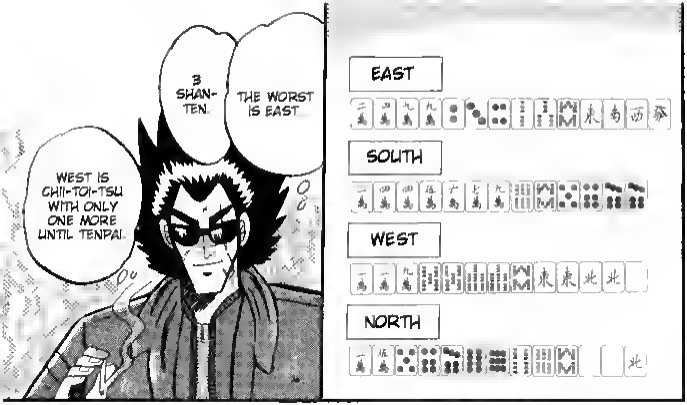

1:10

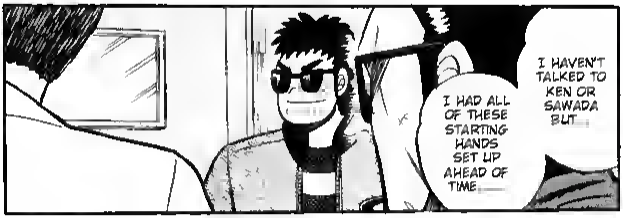
PHEW



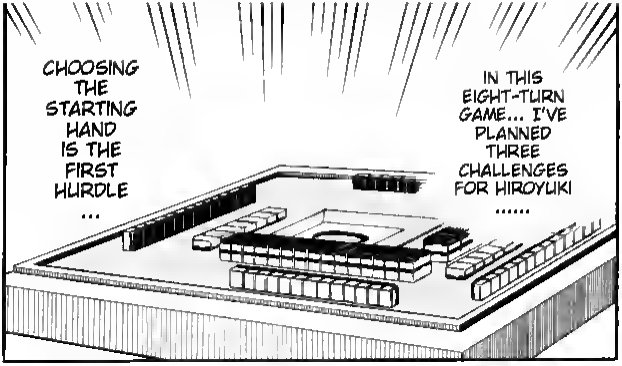
1:10 LEFT

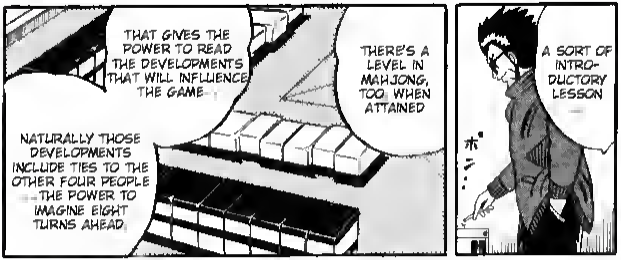
HE'S PROBABLY SURPRISED SINCE THEY'RE ALL GOOD STARTING HANDS
THAT KID HIROYUKI RIGHT AROUND NOW
HEH HEH

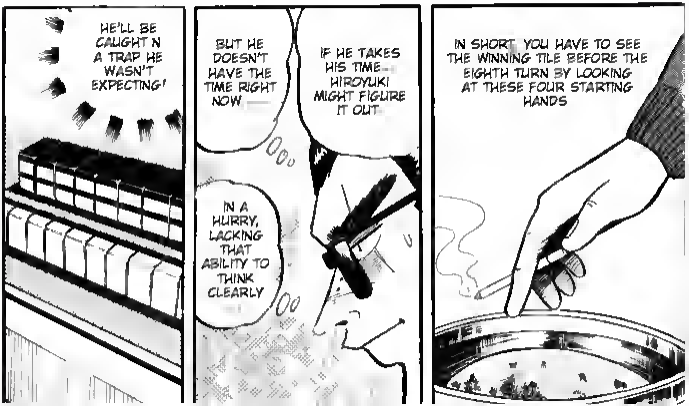

3 SHAN-TEN.
THE WORST IS EAST
WEST IS CHII-TOI-TSU WITH ONLY ONE MORE UNTIL TENPAI.
EAST
SOUTH
WEST
NORTH


I HAVEN'T TALKED TO KEN OR SAWADA BUT...
I HAD ALL OF THESE STARTING HANDS SET UP AHEAD OF TIME...

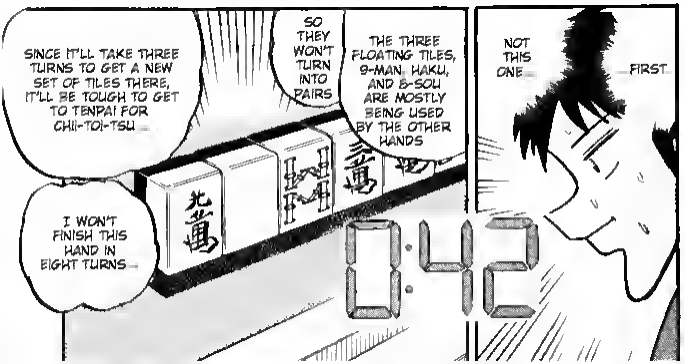
I DON'T THINK HE'LL TRIP UP ON CHOSING FROM THESE STARTING HANDS
IF... HE'S A BIT CALM ABOUT IT...
WELL...
THE WALL FROM THE BEGINNING... THE MACHINE WAS RIGGED IN ADVANCE...
DICE THAT'LL ONLY SHOW A SEVEN AND...
IT'S AN EASY THING TO DO...


CHOOSING THE STARTING HAND IS THE FIRST HURDLE ...
IN THIS EIGHT-TURN GAME... I'VE PLANNED THREE CHALLENGES FOR HIROYUKI .....


THAT GIVES THE POWER TO READ THE DEVELOPMENTS THAT WILL INFLUENCE THE GAME...
THERE'S A LEVEL IN MAHJONG, TOO. WHEN ATTAINED
NATURALLY THOSE DEVELOPMENTS INCLUDE TIES TO THE OTHER FOUR PEOPLE ...THE POWER TO IMAGINE EIGHT TURNS AHEAD.
A SORT OF INTRO-DUCTORY LESSON
ホ゛ン


HE'LL BE CAUGHT N A TRAP HE WASN'T EXPECTING!
BUT HE DOESN'T HAVE THE TIME RIGHT NOW.
IF HE TAKES HIS TIME... HIROYUKI MIGHT FIGURE IT OUT.
IN A HURRY, LACKING THAT ABILITY TO THINK CLEARLY
IN SHORT, YOU HAVE TO SEE THE WINNING TILE BEFORE THE EIGHTH TURN BY LOOKING AT THESE FOUR STARTING HANDS

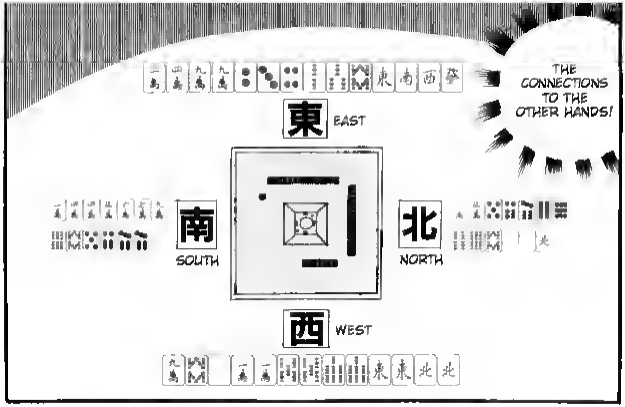
WEST. CHII-TOI-TSU II-SHAN-TEN

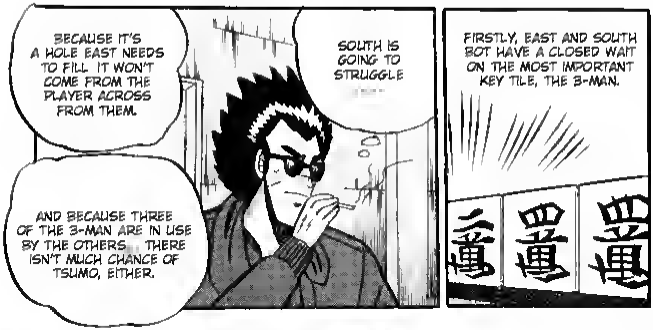

SINCE IT'LL TAKE THREE TURNS TO GET A NEW SET OF TILES THERE, IT'LL BE TOUGH TO GET TO TENPAI FOR CHII-TOI-TSU...
I WON'T FINISH THIS HAND IN EIGHT TURNS...
SO THEY WON'T TURN INTO PAIRS
THE THREE FLOATING TILES, 9-MAN, HAKU, AND 5-SOU ARE MOSTLY BEING USED BY THE OTHER HANDS
NOT THIS ONE...
...FIRST...
0:42

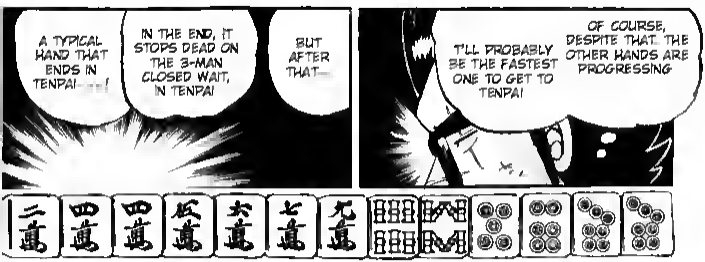
NORTH: 2-SHAN-TEN
TO CONTINUE, AT FIRST GLANCE, NORTH SEEMS FAST...!
BUT
IF I COULD PON IT— IT WOULD REALLY BE FAST...!
THE YAKUHAI HAKU...!
THE PROBLEM IS THE EXPRESS TICKET TO A FAST WIN.
TOO LOW A CHANCE, WITH THE 4-MAN 5-SOU OR 7-SOU THAT I'D NEED FOR THE CLOSED 3-5-MAN AND 4-6-8-SOU WAITS
AND WITH THAT, GETTING TO MENZEN TSUMO IS
SEVEN OF THOSE TILES ARE BEING USED BY THE OTHER HANDS—
LIMITED TO EIGHT TURNS WITH THESE PLAYERS WHO'D DROP THE HAKU—?
SO MY PROBLEM IS—
IT'S AS GOOD AS DEAD...!
IN SHORT— FROM THE MOMENT THAT I CAN'T TAKE THE HAKU FOR THIS HAND
I'M PRETTY MUCH 100% SURE I WON'T BE ABLE TO TAKE IT

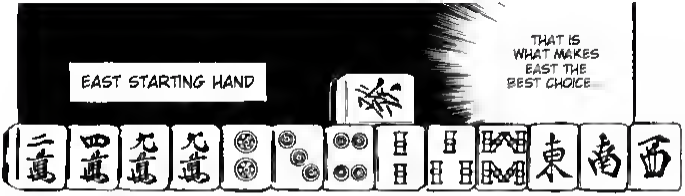
DO I GO WITH THE DEALER'S HAND...!? OR SOUTH.....?
EAST (DEALER) 3-SHAN-TEN
SOUTH 2-SHAN-TEN
IT'S THE BEST STARTING HAND TO WIN QUICKLY WITH A KUI-TAN HAND.
THINKING ABOUT IT NORMALLY THERE'D BE NO PROBLEM WITH SOUTH...
0:30
BUT...

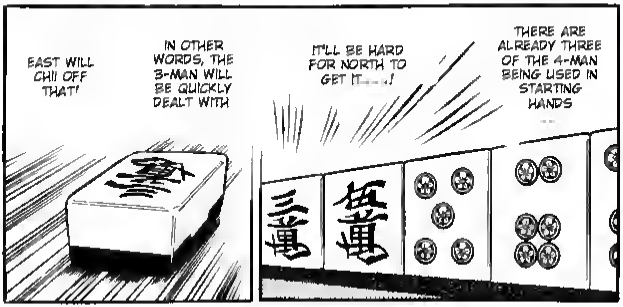
EAST OR SOUTH...!
0:25
DEALER'S HAND (EAST)
SOUTH
THE WAY THE GAME WILL DEVELOP NEEDS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT...!
IN SHORT...
BUT... THAT'S COMPU-TATIONAL MAHJONG
FROM LOOKING AT ONLY THIS HAND... PROBABLY ANYBODY WOULD GO WITH SOUTH
IF IT'S WITH ACTUAL PEOPLE, HERE...
BUT NOW HERE'S THE PROBLEM...
HIROYUKI PROBABLY GOT THAT FAR RIGHT AWAY...


THE CONNECTIONS TO THE OTHER HANDS!
東 EAST
南 SOUTH
北 NORTH
西 WEST

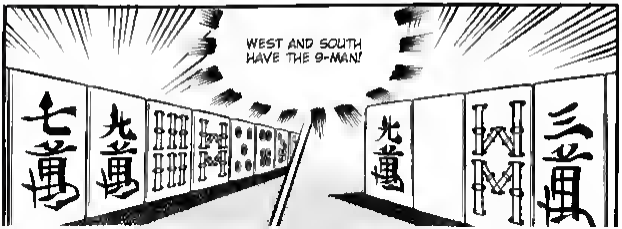

BECAUSE IT'S A HOLE EAST NEEDS TO FILL. IT WON'T COME FROM THE PLAYER ACROSS FROM THEM.
SOUTH IS GOING TO STRUGGLE...
AND BECAUSE THREE OF THE 3-MAN ARE IN USE BY THE OTHERS... THERE ISN'T MUCH CHANCE OF TSUMO, EITHER.
FIRSTLY, EAST AND SOUTH BOT HAVE A CLOSED WAIT ON THE MOST IMPORTANT KEY TILE, THE 3-MAN.

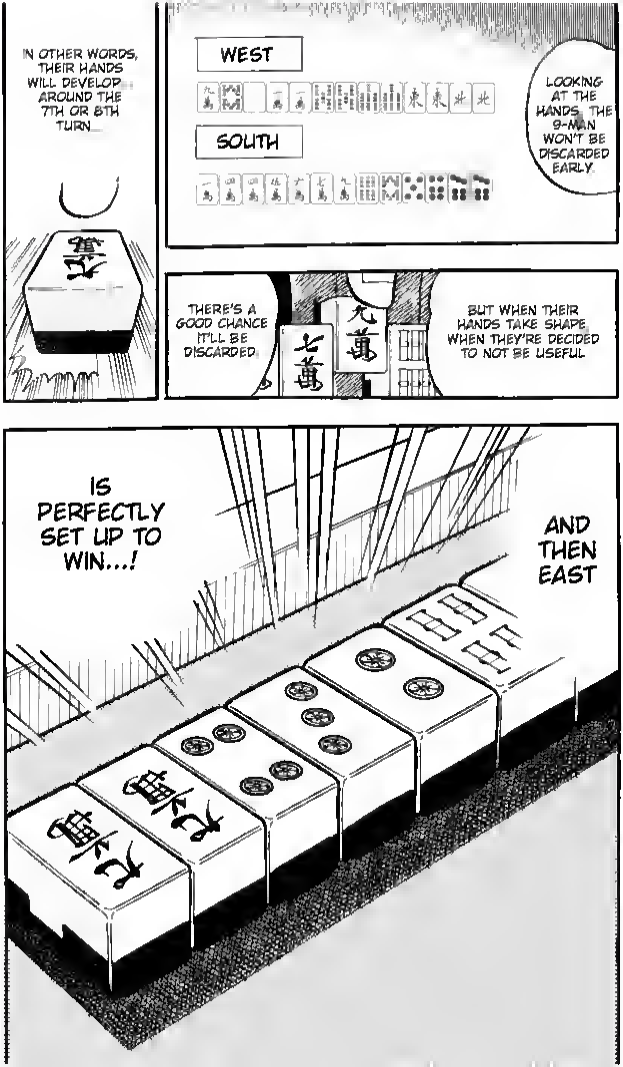

A TYPICAL HAND THAT ENDS IN TENPAI...!
IN THE END, IT STOPS DEAD ON THE 3-MAN CLOSED WAIT, IN TENPAI
BUT AFTER THAT...
I'LL PROBABLY BE THE FASTEST ONE TO GET TO TENPAI
OF COURSE, DESPITE THAT. THE OTHER HANDS ARE PROGRESSING


EAST STARTING HAND
THAT IS WHAT MAKES EAST THE BEST CHOICE


EAST WILL CHII OFF THAT!
IN OTHER WORDS, THE 3-MAN WILL BE QUICKLY DEALT WITH
IT'LL BE HARD FOR NORTH TO GET IT.....!
THERE ARE ALREADY THREE OF THE 4-MAN BEING USED IN STARTING HANDS

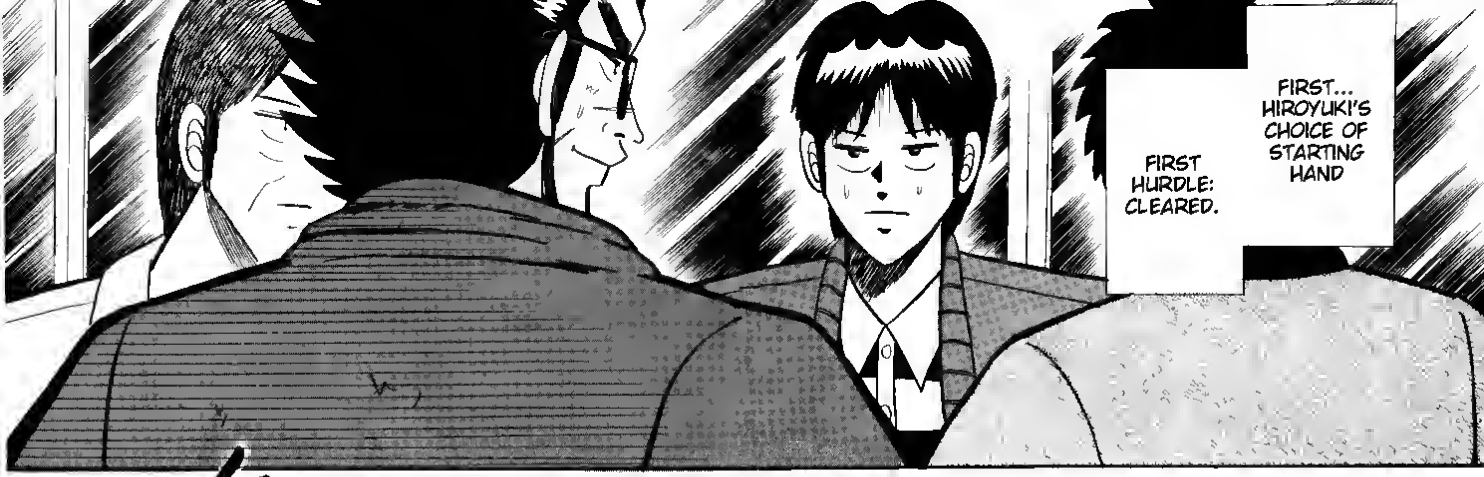
ALSO, EAST HAS ONE MORE DECISIVE ADVANTAGE.....!
THIS IS A BIG STEP!
THE KEY SEQUENCE OF 2-3-4 IS SECURE.....!

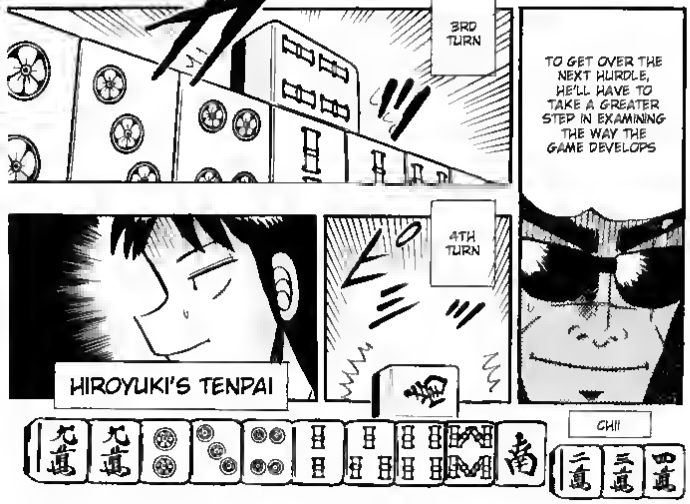

WEST AND SOUTH HAVE THE 9-MAN!

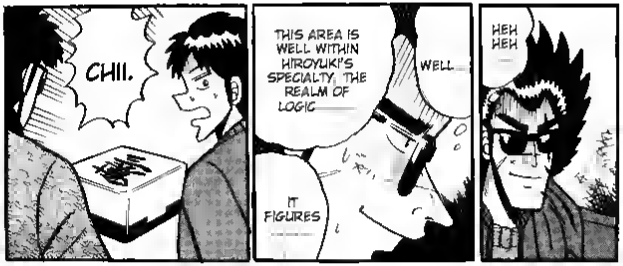

IN OTHER WORDS, THEIR HANDS WILL DEVELOP AROUND THE 7TH OR 8TH TURN...
WEST
SOUTH
LOOKING AT THE HANDS, THE 9-MAN WON'T BE DISCARDED EARLY.
THERE'S A GOOD CHANCE IT'LL BE DISCARDED.
BUT WHEN THEIR HANDS TAKE SHAPE WHEN THEY'RE DECIDED TO NOT BE USEFUL
IS PERFECTLY SET UP TO WIN...!
AND THEN EAST

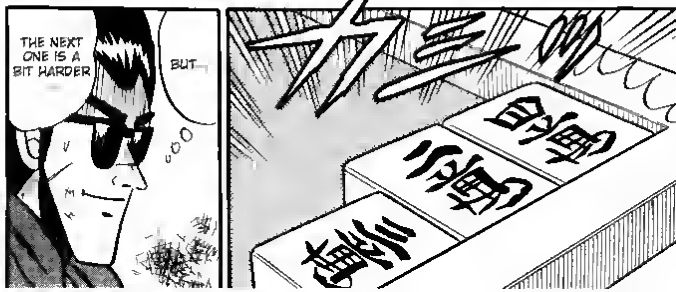
IF SOMEONE ASSUMES IT'S TAN-YAO, IT'S A TILE THAT WILL COME OUT DUE TO A LACK OF CAUTION...
AND THEN, RON...!
WITH A WAIT ON THE 9-MAN THAT HAS A GOOD CHANCE OF COMING OUT ON THE 7TH-8TH TURN...
CHII MAKES IT LOOK LIKE TAN-YAO!
HIDING SAN-SHOKU...!
EAST'S STARTING HAND
IF HIROYUKI HAS THAT MUCH INSIGHT IN THAT SHORT PERIOD OF TIME...
IT'S THE ONLY ONE... THAT HAS A PLAN SET UP TOWARDS WINNING...!
THIS HAND IS THE FARTHEST ONE FROM TENPAI, BUT...
YEAH...
IT'S TIME...
AN EXCEPTIONAL GUY...
HE REALLY IS...

I'VE PICKED EAST...
YES,...
YOU DECIDED ?...
EAST'S STARTING HAND
東
南
西


FIRST HURDLE: CLEARED.
FIRST... HIROYUKI'S CHOICE OF STARTING HAND


3RD TURN
TO GET OVER THE NEXT HURDLE, HE'LL HAVE TO TAKE A GREATER STEP IN EXAMINING THE WAY THE GAME DEVELOPS
4TH TURN
HIROYUKI'S TENPAI
CHII


CHII.
THIS AREA IS WELL WITHIN HIROYUKI'S SPECIALTY, THE REALM OF LOGIC
WELL
IT FIGURES
HEH HEH


THE NEXT ONE IS A BIT HARDER
BUT...

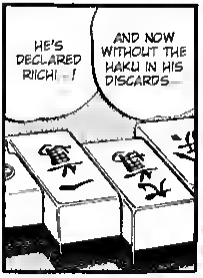
I CAN DO IT!
IT'S PROCEEDING AS I THOUGHT...!
IT'S PERFECT... A DOUBLE WAIT ON 9-MAN OR NAN...
RIICHI.
BUT ON THE 5TH TURN, FROM TEN...!
OR IS IT A SINGLE WAIT ON THE HAKU...?
DID HE GET THAT 4TH HAKU WITH LUCK?
BUT THE HAKU ISN'T IN HIS DISCARDS
HUH?
THAT CHII-TOI-TSU TENPAI...

WHAT THE HELL.....
HUH?
キュッ...
5TH TURN
NORTH HAS TWO HAKU, TEN HAS ONE.
THEN I GUESS THIS SETTLES IT...
IN OTHER WORDS, TEN'S CHII-TOI-TSU IS ON A SINGLE WAIT ON THE HAKU.

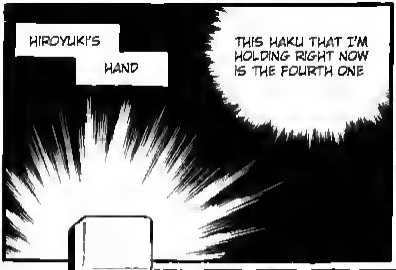
OF ALL THINGS— I'M HOLDING WHAT IS UNMISTAKABLY HIS WINNING TILE—
THIS IS CRAZY—!
THIS IS MY SECOND CHALLENGE
HIRO—
HEH HEH...
IS IT MY FATE—?
IS THIS THE KIND OF LUCK I'VE BEEN BORN WITH—?
YOU'D BETTER DO A GOOD JOB OF GETTING PAST IT...!
THE SECOND HURDLE IS MY RIICHI, WAITING ON A SINGLE HAKU.

天
CHAPTER 29
8-TURN GAME
PART II

HIROYUKI
8-TURN GAME...


HE'S DECLARED RICHI...!
AND NOW WITHOUT THE HAKU IN HIS DISCARDS...

TEN'S STARTING HAND WAS IN II-SHAN-TEN FOR CHII-TOI-TSU


HIROYUKI'S HAND
THIS HAKU THAT I'M HOLDING RIGHT NOW IS THE FOURTH ONE

NO MATTER HOW I THINK ABOUT IT
BECAUSE THE OTHER TWO HAKU WERE IN KEN'S STARTING HAND
GO

CHII

TEN'S DEFINITELY DECLARED RICHI, WAITING ON A SINGLE HAKU...!
THERE'S NO WAY OUT...

AND WAIT FOR IT TO COME FROM KEN...
I'LL HAVE A SINGLE WAIT ON HAKU!

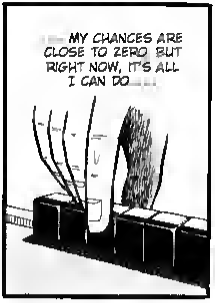
IF I CAN DRAW ANOTHER NAN...
南
南

I HAVE TO RE-ARRANGE MY HAND.

南
南
南

CHI!
二萬
三萬
四萬

TEN'S OBVIOUSLY WAITING ON THE HAKU NOW...!
六萬
南
南

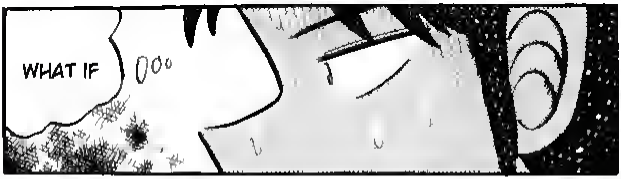

...MY CHANCES ARE CLOSE TO ZERO, BUT RIGHT NOW, IT'S ALL I CAN DO...

THANKFULLY, IT'S STILL ONLY THE FIFTH TURN... IT'S GOING TO BE CLOSE...!

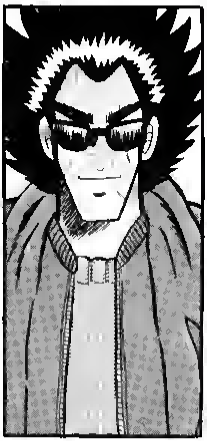
.....WAIT.....!

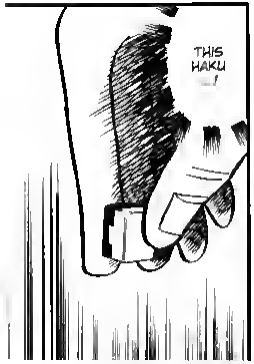
HALF LIKE HE'S CONFESSING WHAT HE'S WAITING ON...!
FOR HIM TO BE WAITING ON THAT HAKU FROM HIS INITIAL HAND IS...
BECAUSE I LOOKED AT TEN'S STARTING HAND EARLIER...
WHY WOULD HE WAIT ON THE HAKU?
SO THEN, WHY...?
IT SHOULD BE NATURAL TO DO THAT...
THAT WAY IT WOULD CLEARLY BE MORE DIFFICULT TO PREDICT...
THE 1-MAN OR 2-PIN OR WHATEVER WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER...
WOULDN'T IT BE THE WORST POSSIBLE WAIT IF I DIDN'T DRAW THE HAKU...?!
WOULDN'T IT BE RELYING ON CHANCE TOO MUCH?...
SO THAT'S IT...
IF I DREW A HAKU BY CHANCE IT'D BE A GOOD WAY TO PUT ME IN A BAD POSITION

THAT RIICHI.....


WHAT IF

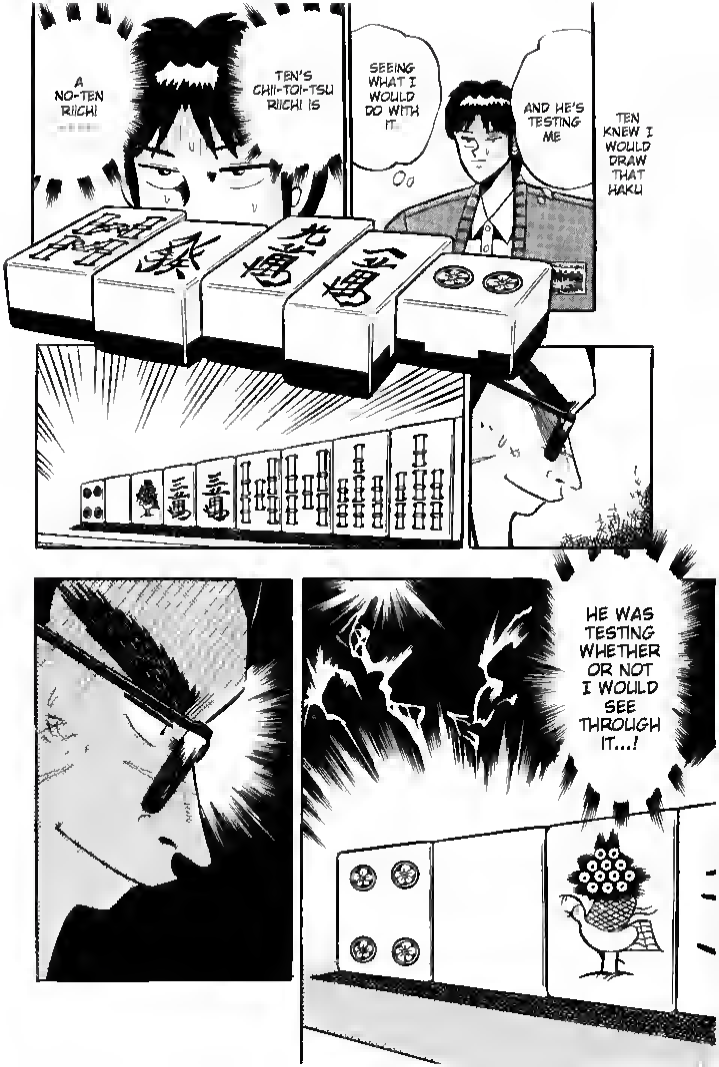
YEAH... THAT'S WHAT IT IS....!

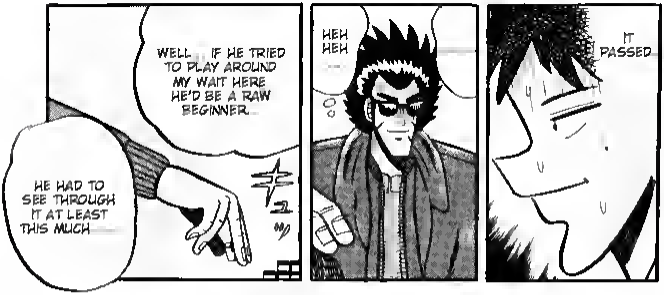



THIS HAKU...!

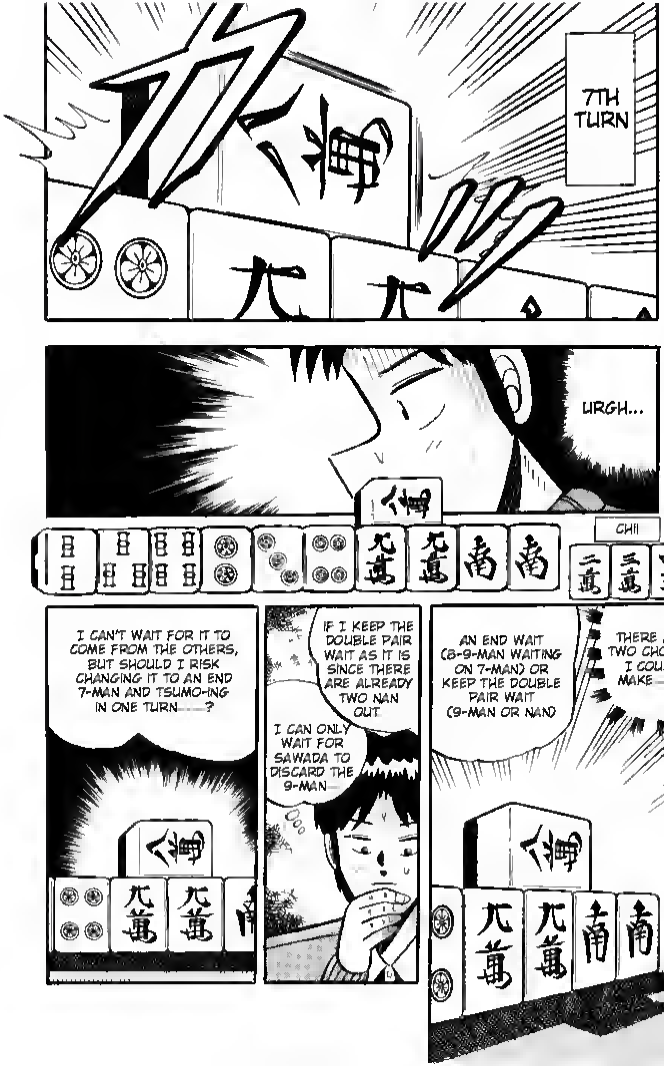
SURE. IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT NORMALLY, THERE'S NO WAY TO AVOID HIS HAKU WAIT. BUT THERE'S AN ESCAPE ROUTE!

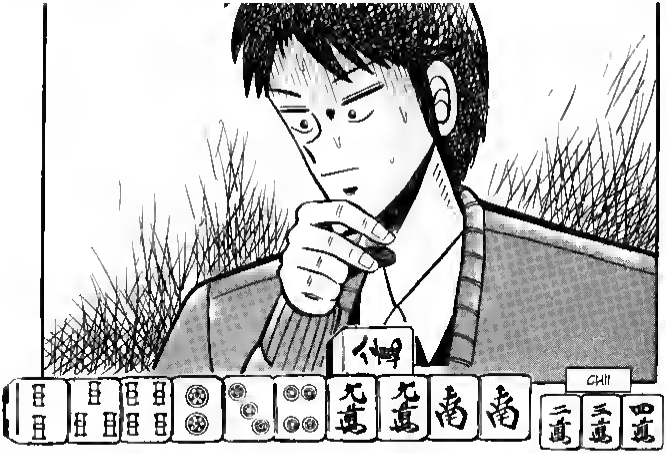
IT WILL PASS!
IT SHOULD PASS .....!
FIRSTLY, THERE'S NO DOUBT ABOUT IT
THIS WHOLE GAME WAS A SET-UP...!
IN OTHER WORDS
WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT, THE WHOLE GAME IS FULL OF STRANGE THINGS
ALL FOUR PLAYERS HAD GOOD STARTING HANDS
AND SO ON.
ON THE HAKU HE HAD IN HIS STARTING HAND
HE BOTHERED TO RIICHI


A NO-TEN RIICHI
TEN'S CHII-TOI-TSU RIICHI IS
SEEING WHAT I WOULD DO WITH IT...
AND HE'S TESTING ME
TEN KNEW I WOULD DRAW THAT HAKU
HE WAS TESTING WHETHER OR NOT I WOULD SEE THROUGH IT...!

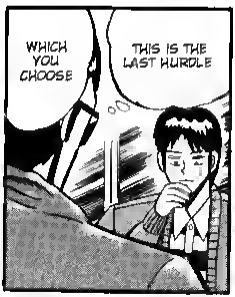

WELL... IF HE TRIED TO PLAY AROUND MY WAIT HERE HE'D BE A RAW BEGINNER...
HE HAD TO SEE THROUGH IT AT LEAST THIS MUCH...
HEH HEH...
IT PASSED

I'M PREDICTING THIS'LL BE HIROYUKI'S LIMIT!
BUT THE THIRD AND FINAL HURDLE IS DEFINITELY THE TOUGHEST ONE...
NO-TEN RICHI CLEARED


7TH TURN
URGH...
CHII
I CAN'T WAIT FOR IT TO COME FROM THE OTHERS, BUT SHOULD I RISK CHANGING IT TO AN END 7-MAN AND TSUMO-ING IN ONE TURN——?
IF I KEEP THE DOUBLE PAIR WAIT AS IT IS SINCE THERE ARE ALREADY TWO NAN OUT
I CAN ONLY WAIT FOR SAWADA TO DISCARD THE 9-MAN...
AN END WAIT (8-9-MAN WAITING ON 7-MAN) OR KEEP THE DOUBLE PAIR WAIT (9-MAN OR NAN)
THERE ARE TWO CHOICES I COULD MAKE——!

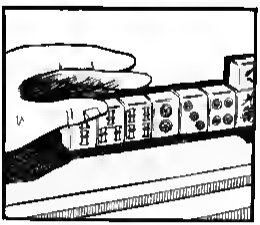

CHI!

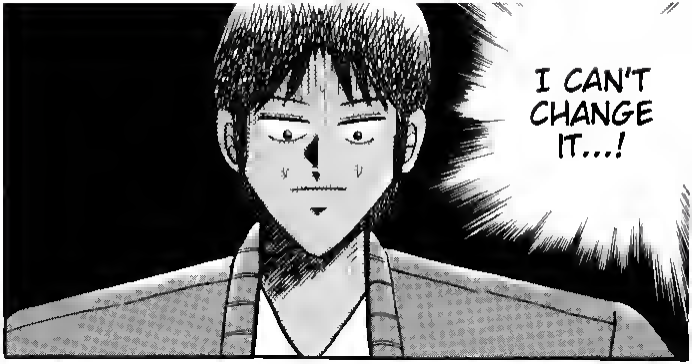
WILL ESTABLISH HOW GOOD YOU ARE

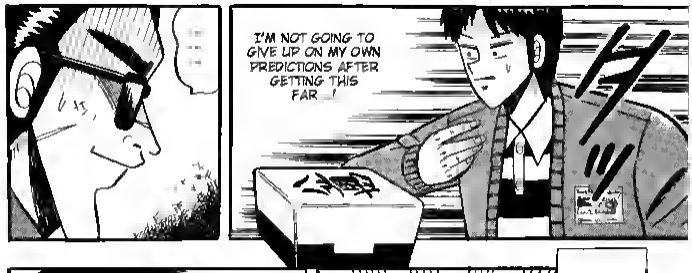

WHICH YOU CHOOSE
THIS IS THE LAST HURDLE

HEH HEH

.....
NO.

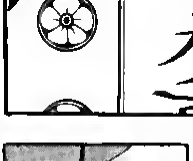



I CAN'T CHANGE IT...!

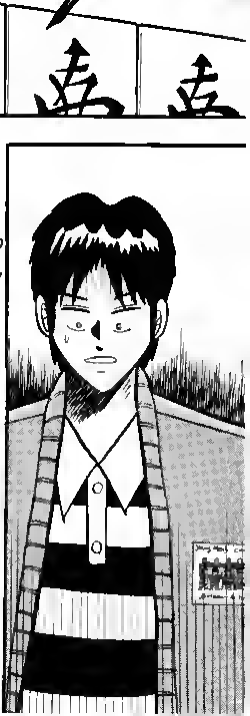

I'M NOT GOING TO GIVE UP ON MY OWN PREDICTIONS AFTER GETTING THIS FAR...!

7TH TURN, SAWADA
チャッ
I'M COUNTING ON SAWADA TO DISCARD IT

AFTER THIS
ONLY ONE MORE CHANCE.....!
URGH
8TH TURN
HUH...?

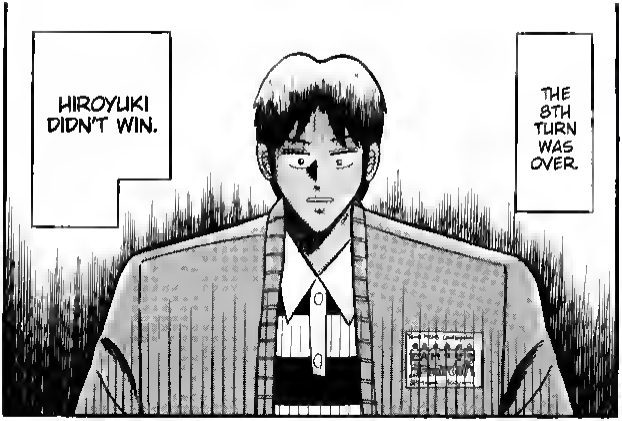


THE TILE I COULD HAVE USED!



EXPECTING IT TO COME FROM SAWADA!
I'M STILL KEEPING THE DOUBLE PAIR WAIT ON THE 9-MAN.
YEAH!
I CAN'T START PLODDING MY WAY THROUGH MY DECISIONS.
LAST TURN, SAWADA.
SAWADA'S HAND
THE 9-MAN, PLEASE!

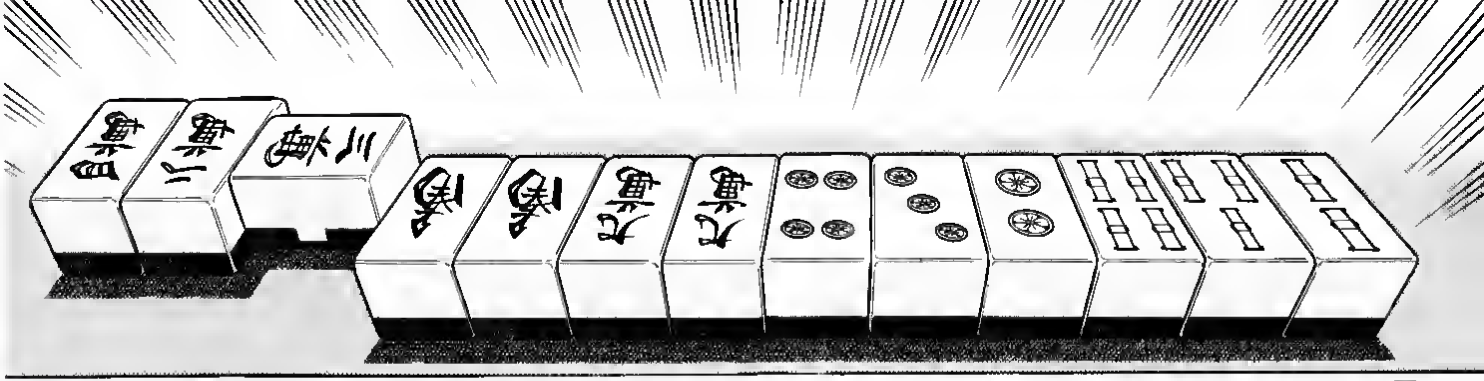
Young Hee's Confidently


HIROYUKI DIDN'T WIN.
THE 8TH TURN WAS OVER.

YOU DIDN'T WIN BY THE EIGHTH TURN
AS PROMISED, YOU'LL GIVE UP ON PARTICIPATING IN THE EAST-WEST BATTLE.

GUESS THAT'S IT, THEN

KEN
OPEN UP HIROYUKI'S HAND



I WOULD HAVE GONE WITH THE CHANGE TO AN END WAIT ON THE 7-MAN, 100 PERCENT...

IF IT HAD BEEN ME, I WOULDN'T HAVE KEPT THE DOUBLE PAIR WAIT...

100%?

HUH?

YEAH

HUH...?

?

AFTER THAT, THE NO-TEN RIICHI

FIRST, THE CHOICE OF STARTING HAND.....

DISCARDING THE 5-MAN ON THE 7TH TURN

BUT YOU SCREWED UP ON THE LAST ONE

YOU MADE A MISTAKE CHOOSING THE DOUBLE PAIR WAIT OVER THE END WAIT.....

YOU PASSED WITHOUT TROUBLE THAT FAR.....

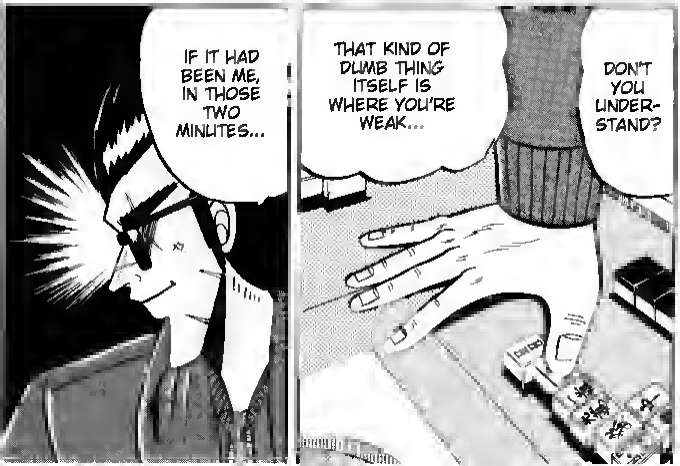
I GAVE YOU THREE CHALLENGES.

IN THIS 8-TURN MAHJONG GAME.....

THAT THE NEXT ONE COMING WOULD BE THE 7-MAN
BUT... ONLY A GOD COULD KNOW
SURE OF IT, HUH
WHY WOULD YOU BE SO SURE OF THAT...?
B-BUT
HEH HEH HEH
IT'S A REALM CONTROLLED BY CHANCE...
PUTTING IT A DIFFERENT WAY, IT'S NOT SOMETHING YOU COULD PREDICT...
HUH?
JUST WHAT DID YOU DO IN THE TWO MINUTES YOU HAD...?
YOU JUST DON'T GET IT AT ALL, HIROYUKI
REASONED IT OUT AFTER GETTING OUT AND ORGANIZING THE STARTING HANDS
WHAT DID I DO?
?

DUMBASS.

?


IF IT HAD BEEN ME, IN THOSE TWO MINUTES...
THAT KIND OF DUMB THING ITSELF IS WHERE YOU'RE WEAK...
DON'T YOU UNDER-STAND?

I'D OPEN UP ALL OF THE WALL
AND MEMORIZE IT.
IT'S THE FIRST THING WE'D THINK OF DOING
WHEN GIVEN TWO MINUTES WHILE EVERYONE WAS OUT OF THE ROOM
IF IT HAD BEEN ANYONE FROM THE EAST-WEST PLAYERS THAT ARE GOING TO BE THERE, THEY'D HAVE DONE THE SAME.
IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S JUST ME
AM I WRONG ——,?
IT'S THE ONLY THING YOU CAN DO.
IF SOME-ONE WAS TO SAY YOU HAD TO WIN WITHIN 8 TURNS
B—BUT.
AND WOULD HAVE KEPT THE END WAIT HERE
——SO NATURALLY I KNEW THAT YOUR NEXT DRAW WAS THE 7-MAN—
HEY, HIRO.
HEH HEH
THAT'S RIDICULOUS

THE IDEA DIDN'T EVEN CROSS YOUR MIND.
BUT, HIROYUKI, YOU COULDN'T IMAGINE DOING THAT.
WE'RE DIFFERENT
THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE LIMITED
WE WOULD DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO WIN.
WE WOULD TURN OVER THE WALL.